

Russia 'will not permit nuclear export'

VIENNA (AP) — Russia has pledged to honour agreements designed to help prevent exports of nuclear weapons material or technology from the territory of the former Soviet Union, a U.N. agency said Tuesday. A statement released by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Russia had agreed to abide by non-proliferation and safeguards agreements signed by the Soviet Union, which disintegrated late last year. The pledges also were contained in a letter signed by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, which the agency released. "The leaders of Russia will make every effort to ensure that the collaboration between our country and the International Atomic Energy Agency continues to flourish," the letter said. The letter, dated Jan. 18, also promised "all feasible measures" to pay a Soviet debt to the agency. It was written one day after Hans Blix, director general of the IAEA, expressed worries that Soviet disintegration and resulting lax controls could strew nuclear material abroad for use in weapons manufacture. Mr. Blix also announced Jan. 17 that Russia had assumed the Soviet seat at the Vienna-based IAEA, the U.N. nuclear watchdog, after giving initial assurances to abide by non-proliferation and inspections agreements signed earlier by the Soviet Union.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تعبر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

Volume 17 Number 49112

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1992, RAGAB 17, 1412

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Cabinet studies industry and trade proposals

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet on Tuesday discussed a series of moves aimed at stimulating the industry and trade sector through granting the private sector a bigger role and encouraging free enterprise, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The Council of Ministers, meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, studied a working paper submitted by Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour dealing with economic policies and the ministry's concept of the sector.

The paper called on the government:

1. To give greater room to the private sector in such matters such as education, transport and health. The government should ensure the continuation of services of these sectors and provide the required infrastructure;

2. To lift administrative restrictions and limit its role in order to make way for the stimulation of the economy through the private sector;

3. To upgrade legislation and ensure the continuation of the private sector's role.

Dr. Ensour told the Cabinet that Jordan would achieve a high standard of industrial progress in view of the highly trained local manpower, the presence of "liquidity in banks, national stability under democracy and a wise leadership."

He suggested that the government expand the free zones and the industrial cities, open more trade centres abroad, set up a centre for directing investments, establish an export promotion institution, reduce routine and bureaucracy and offer equal treatment to the industrial and agricultural sector in the context of customs and other charges on raw material and income tax.

The Cabinet reviewed the paper and decided to hold further meetings to work out the final formula to achieve the objective of stimulating the industry and trade sector.

Petra said other members of the Cabinet were also expected to submit similar working papers on their respective fields.

U.S. envoy presents credentials to Herzog

TEL AVIV (AP) — The new U.S. ambassador to Israel, William C. Harrop, on Tuesday presented his credentials to Israeli President Chaim Herzog. Mr. Harrop, 62, has served in posts in Europe, Australia and Africa and in top positions in the State Department. His last assignment was ambassador to Zaire. He is arriving at a time when relations between Israel and the United States are often strained over Middle East peace issues and Israel's role in U.S.-sponsored negotiations with the Arabs in Washington. Mr. Harrop, who has no Middle East experience, replaces William Brown, a fluent Hebrew speaker who served three years as ambassador and was deputy chief of mission in Israel in 1979-82. Mr. Brown was reportedly very popular with Israeli officials.

Former Arab League chief dies

CAIRO (AP) — Abdul Khalek Hassouna, a former secretary-general of the Arab League, died Tuesday, Cairo Radio said. He was 93. The radio did not mention the cause of death. Mr. Hassouna, an Egyptian, was the league's secretary-general for four consecutive terms, from 1952 to 1972. He was the second chief executive after Abdul Rahman Azzam, also an Egyptian. During World War II Mr. Hassouna was governor of the Mediterranean city of Alexandria. He became Egypt's foreign minister shortly before getting the Arab League post.

Washington round ensured two-track negotiations, but little else, Majali says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian and Palestinian teams to the third round of bilateral peace talks with Israel in Washington earlier this month succeeded in ensuring that negotiations would be held on separate Palestinian-Israeli tracks, but no substantive discussion was achieved, the head of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, said Tuesday.

Speaking on Jordan Television upon his return to Amman from Washington, Dr. Majali said: "We presented our views and the Israelis did the same and we reviewed with them the agenda for the negotiations but did not delve into any substance." "They only thing we succeeded in achieving was a two-track process in the talks giving the Palestinians and the Jordanians separate

channels," Dr. Majali said. "In addition we talked about U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and their interpretation on the part of the world community and Israel, as well as the situation in the occupied Arab territories, and the building of Israeli settlements, but we did not enter into substantive discussions," he said.

"The Israeli delegation had to leave Jan. 16 without reaching with us an agreement on the next meeting," he said.

He said the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation suggested that the next session be held in Washington between Feb. 10 and 25 and that there can be no justification for any change in the venue without any meaningful progress in the talks.

Hanan ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, echoed Dr. Majali's view that success was achieved in the two-track process only.

Dr. Ashrawi, speaking at a press conference held at the Jerusalem hotel, touched on the outcome of the talks in Washington, the situation in the occupied Arab territories but most impor-

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Kabariti: Chance in Moscow to discuss all options without abandoning rights

AMMAN (Petra) — Acting Minister of Information Abdul Karim Al Kabariti said Tuesday that Jordan views the Middle East multilateral talks as an opportunity to discuss all future expectations, options and possibilities without abandoning Arab rights.

Mr. Kabariti told reporters the fortitude of the Jordanian stand and the Kingdom's continued coordination with the Palestinian delegation underline its real desire to work for a just peace.

Asked whether attempts to convince Syria to attend the multilateral talks had failed, the minister said his recent visit to Syria was private and had no political implications.

But, he added, despite the differences in views between Jordan and Syria on the timing of the conference, both countries agree in opposing any form of normalising relations with Israel before any progress was achieved in the bilateral talks.

Mr. Kabariti said Jordanian-Syrian relations "are special and distinct." He affirmed that the two countries would continue their efforts to reach the aspired strategic integration between them.

Palestinians demand diaspora representation in Moscow talks

By Lamis Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian participation at Middle East multilateral talks scheduled to be held in Moscow next week hinges on representation of Palestinians in the diaspora and from Arab East Jerusalem and guarantees that there will be no separate Arab deals with Israel, according to a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official.

PLO Executive Committee member Suleiman Najjib said that the PLO cannot accept representation to remain confined to the Palestinians in the occupied territories to prevent the fragmentation of the Palestinian people and problem.

The PLO was expected to rally support for its demands at an Arab foreign ministers meeting that will be held in Morocco on Friday.

Statements by PLO officials and members of the Palestinian delegation Tuesday indicated that the issues of Israel settlements, Palestinian representation and concern about a unilateral Israeli agreement remain top unguaranteed prerequisites for the success of the peace talks, from the Palestinian viewpoint.

"Unless all Palestinians are represented the peace talks will not deal with the national rights of the Palestinian people," Mr. Najjib said in an interview with the Jordan Times on Tuesday.

The U.S. refusal to allow the PLO to take part in the third round of talks that are to be held in Moscow on Jan. 28-29 and again pushed to the surface the thorny issues of representation of Palestinians from East Jerusalem and the diaspora.

Member of the Palestinian delegation Dr. Saeb Erekat confirmed on Tuesday that the U.S. had turned down a Palestinian request for Palestinians in the diaspora to take part in the Moscow talks.

"The United States administration has categorically rejected Palestinian participation from outside the occupied territories ... in the upcoming negotiations in

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Confrontations grow in Algeria; leaders focus on improving economy

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Youths hurled bottles and rocks at police in scattered clashes and a grenade was reported killed in a weekend attack highlighting the growing confrontation between Algeria's military-backed rulers and their opponents.

Police guarding the government palace, which houses several ministries, fired warning shots late Monday to scatter dozens of youths pelting them with rocks and bottles, authorities reported Tuesday.

Similar attacks on police roadblocks were reported in suburbs of the capital no one was injured in any of the clashes, authorities said.

The government newspaper El Watan reported that a police officer was killed Saturday in Lakhdaria, 100 kilometres east of Algiers in an attack by four men. Their identities and details were not disclosed.

Lakhdaria was the site of violent clashes last June between security forces and rioting Islamic fundamentalists. Several people were killed, including a police commissioner.

The gendarme's death marks the second reported killing of a member of the security forces since the military forced President Chadli Benjedid to resign Jan. 11 after 13 years in power.

A soldier was killed and two policemen injured in a machine-

gun and bomb attack on a road-block Saturday near Algiers. A bomb attack against a police station has also been reported.

The five-man High State Committee ruling Algeria warned Monday that "all means" would be used to counter the attacks.

Algeria's new authorities cancelled second-round voting scheduled for last Thursday that would have given the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) control of the 430-seat parliament.

The fundamentalists, who hope to establish North Africa's first Islamic republic, won 188 of the 231 seats decided in first round elections Dec. 21.

The first round vote was widely regarded as the freest ever held in an Arab country for a parliament that would wield actual authority. The military opposed Mr. Benjedid's willingness to share power with the FIS.

Mohammad Boudiaf, a hero of Algeria's war for independence from France, presides over the High Committee exercising Mr. Benjedid's functions until the scheduled end of his term in December 1993.

But the body's real power lies with Major General Khaled Nezzar, the defence minister, who controls the tanks and soldiers that have taken up positions in

(Continued on page 5)

SLA men besiege UNIFIL village

TYRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli-backed militiamen besieged the hamlet of Rashaf in South Lebanon Tuesday and were erecting a barbed wire fence in an apparent attempt to absorb part of it into Israeli "security zone."

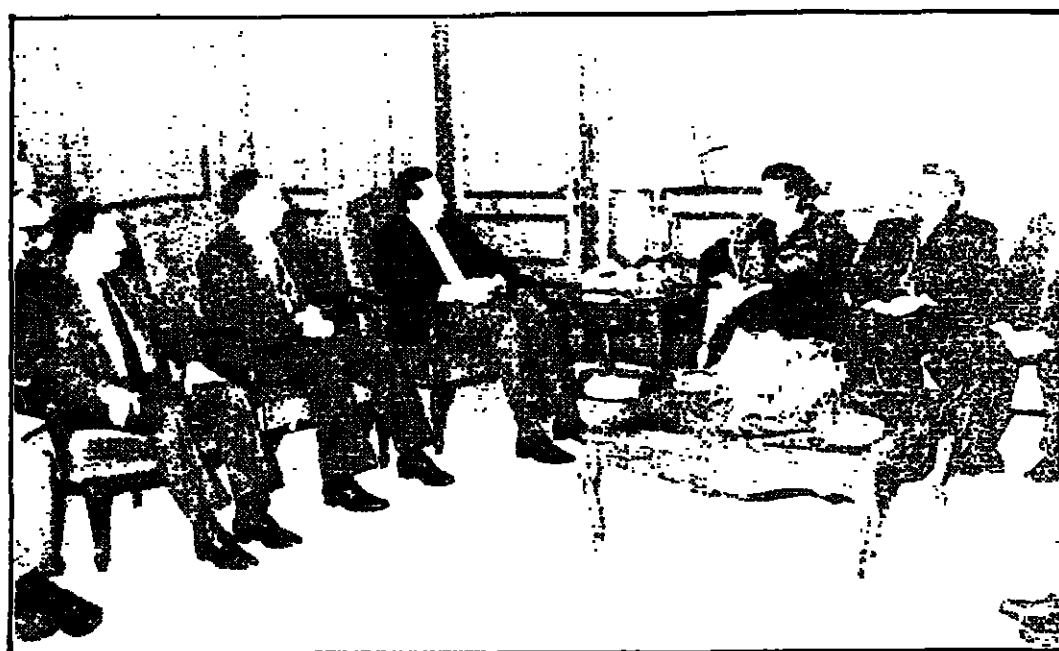
A police spokesman, who cannot be named in line with regulations, said militiamen of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) set up a checkpoint at the northern entrance of the hamlet and were preventing its 92 citizens from leaving.

He said the SLA also was erecting a barbed wire fence separating the village's northern sector from the main square, where six Nepalese soldiers of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) maintain an outpost.

"It seems they are trying to annex part of Rashaf," the spokesman said.

Rashaf, 30 kilometres south-east of the port city of Tyre, is on the northern edge of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone."

The foreign ministry, in a statement, said Lebanon's U.N. ambassador, Khalil Mekkawi, was instructed to " lodge a strongly-worded complaint with the Security Council against Israel's repeated aggression on Lebanese territory and its siege of Rashaf."



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and senior cabinet members Tuesday meet with members of the Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel (Petra photo)

Gaza expulsion appeal said rejected; army woos settlers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — An army review panel turned down appeals of seven Palestinians against orders to expel them from the occupied Gaza Strip, news reports said Tuesday. The army refused comment on the reports.

The expulsions orders, among 12 issued on Jan. 2, brought condemnation from the U.N. Security Council. Human rights groups said the expulsions violated international law.

The orders caused a delay in the third round of Middle East peace talks last week in Washington. Arab delegates boycotted the negotiations until the Security Council adopted its resolution of condemnation.

Once the army panel rejects an appeal on expulsion, those ordered expelled can turn to the supreme court. However, the

court has never reversed an expulsion order.

The appeal of the seven Gazans was rejected by a review panel after three days of hearings, the daily Haaretz and Israel Radio's Arabic service reported Tuesday.

An army spokesman, who cannot be identified by name under regulations, said only that the panel issued its recommendation but it had not been made public. He would not confirm or deny the news reports.

A separate board hearing five other expulsion appeals in the West Bank is expected to issue its report in a few days, he said.

The 12 expulsions were ordered after the slaying of four Israelis in the occupied territories since October. Those ordered expelled were not charged with the murders, but accused of unspeci-

fied anti-Israeli incitement.

Under a ruling by the supreme court, the army hearings were held in public for the first time. However, both appeals panels ruled that most evidence would remain secret.

Israel has expelled 67 people since the Palestinian uprising against occupation began in December 1987.

The expulsions have been repeatedly criticised by Western nations and human rights groups as a violation of the 1949 Geneva conventions which prohibit "individual or mass forcible transfers as well as deportations" from occupied territory.

The Israeli government, court- ing Jewish settlers ahead of expected early elections, has sent more troops to the occupied terri-

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Milo suggests 'quiet' accord on settlement halt

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An Israeli minister has suggested Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir could reach a private agreement with the United States on freezing Jewish settlement in the occupied territories.

"He can arrive at a quiet agreement with the Americans on it," Police Minister Ronni Milo considered close Mr. Shamir, was quoted as telling the influential Haaretz newspaper in an interview published on Tuesday.

"Publicly it will be difficult for him to announce a settlement freeze," said Mr. Milo.

The hardline Shamir, campaigning for expected early elections, vowed on Monday that "no one, no power on earth can stop this building" in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Washington, which calls the settlements a major obstacle to peace, is to decide on an Israeli request for \$10 billion in loan

guarantees for immigrant integration.

Palestinians say Israel would use low-interest funds raised on the guarantees to build more Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Some Arab delegates to Middle East talks with Israel have threatened to withdraw from the peace process unless the Jewish state halts the settlement policy.

Mr. Milo said Washington could rely on a private agreement with Mr. Shamir despite the prime minister's vocal pro-settlement stance.

"Shamir is careful to honour his commitments to the United States more than his commitments to his coalition partners," the police minister said.

On Tuesday Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai advocated more settlement even at the risk of the "hardship" that loss of the guarantees could cause Israelis.

Khaddam cuts short Iran visit; talks underline ties

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam left Tehran Tuesday, cutting short what the official Iranian media had said would be a three-day visit.

The state-run Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), said Mr. Khaddam and his entourage, which included Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, were seen off by Iranian Vice-President Hassan Habibi.

Mr. Habibi told reporters at the airport that his talks with Mr. Khaddam had been "very fruitful," IRNA reported.

He also repeated that Israel must release some 300 Arabs it was holding.

IRNA quoted Mr. Khaddam as saying that Syria had decided not to attend multilateral talks with Israel, set for next week in Moscow, because the conference "ignores the rights of Arab nations."

Reporting Mr. Khaddam's arrival in Tehran Monday, both

IRNA and Tehran Radio said the visit would last three days.

IRNA reported earlier that Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati had left for the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, early Tuesday.

Iran has been keen to expand relations with the newly-independent republics of the former Soviet Union.

In a meeting with Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani earlier Tuesday, Mr. Khaddam said that the timing of his visit was "vital" due to the breakup of the Soviet Union and formation of new republics on Iran's northern border.

"We attach extraordinary importance to cooperation with Iran and consider that the expansion of our cooperation is to the benefit of our two countries," IRNA quoted him as saying.

Mr. Rafsanjani endorsed Mr. Khaddam's call for greater cooperation between the two allies, IRNA reported.

Russia pushes for Moscow conference on Middle East

TUNIS (Agencies) — Russia, anxious to maintain a role in the Middle East peace process, is pressing Arab states not to boycott multilateral talks set to open in Moscow next week, diplomats and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said on Tuesday.

Syria and Lebanon have said they will not attend the Moscow talks in protest at Israeli intransigence over the peace process, but the Russian government is keen that the talks go ahead as planned at foreign minister level, they said.

A boycott by two or more states would be seen as a setback for the peace talks, which are co-sponsored by Washington and Moscow, and the Russian government is anxious to avoid a foreign policy failure, the diplomats said.

Diplomats said Arab states were in contact about whether to hold a proposed Arab League

U.N. demands surrender of Libyan suspects

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday unanimously urged Libya to surrender suspects sought in the bombings of Pan Am Flight 103 over Scotland in 1988 and a French airliner over North Africa in 1989.

There were no abstentions in the vote on the 15-member council.

Diplomats said the resolution was unprecedented in involving the council in a legal dispute and taking sides in a legal dispute among member states.

The United States and Britain have indicted two Libyans in connection with the December 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which were 270 people were killed. France has issued warrants for four Libyans in the bombing of a French airliner over North Africa in which 170 died.

Libya has denied any involvement in the two bombings.

Libya said it was seeking arbitration of the dispute under the Montreal convention against airline terrorism and would take the case to the International Court of Justice if the Western powers reject arbitration.

The resolution passed Tuesday does not use the word "extradition," but Western diplomats said the meaning was clear, and Libya agreed.

The measure urges the Libyan government to immediately "provide a full and effective response to those (Western) requests for information and extradition" so as to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism.

Arafat clears way for full India ties with Israel

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat Tuesday urged his long-time ally India to participate in Middle East peace talks and gave implicit approval for full diplomatic ties between New Delhi and Israel.

"The exchange of ambassadors is a sovereign act," Mr. Arafat told a news conference during a three-day visit to India.

"Our bonds are so strong that they cannot be affected by other things," he said of the ties that India established with the PLO in 1974.

"I insist that India cannot be absent from the (Middle East) peace talks," Mr. Arafat said.

Indian officials said this was a clear signal from Mr. Arafat to New Delhi to go ahead in seeking full ties with Israel. They said a final move would not be at the expense of ties with the PLO.

Relations between India and Israel have not risen above consu-

lar level since the 1984 birth of the Jewish state, but the two countries have been inching closer to an exchange of ambassadors.

Indian Foreign Minister Madhavsinh Solanki said last week New Delhi would review its ties with Tel Aviv if progress was made in the Middle East talks.

Although Mr. Arafat avoided direct criticism of India, he voiced general disappointment over the recent United Nations vote that scrapped a long-standing resolution equating Zionism with racism. India voted for the United States-sponsored move.

Mr. Arafat blamed President George Bush for "pressuring everyone."

"We had agreed that this point (scrapping the Zionism resolution) will be suspended until next year when we had taken something tangible in hand (in the

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Amnesty International concerned about secret detentions by Israel

LONDON — Amnesty International has called on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to guarantee the safety of six Lebanese nationals who "disappeared" into secret detention in Israel in mid-1990 after they had been taken prisoner in Lebanon and reportedly tortured by the Lebanese Forces militia. They are now known to be held in Israel, although their whereabouts have not been disclosed.

"We have asked Prime Minister Shamir to provide the legal reasons why these men have been held in secret and to tell their relatives where they are and what their medical condition is," Amnesty International said. "We also want assurances that no other detainees are currently being held in secret in Israeli custody."

Two of the six detainees were taken prisoner by the Lebanese Forces on Nov. 16 1987 at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Beirut. The other four were seized on Dec. 18 1987 from the "Gardenia" ferry of other people seized from the ship, including its captain, were later released.

According to Amnesty International's information, these detainees were held without any legal proceedings in the Lebanese Forces intelligence centre in Adonis in central Lebanon. They were accused of belonging to the Hizbollah organisation and were allegedly tortured.

After several months family visits and correspondence were allowed through the good offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). However, the last contacts their families had with them were in April and May 1990. After that the Lebanese Forces said the six had been moved but would not say where. The families believed the six had been taken to Israel — but until the beginning of this year the Israeli authorities consistently refused to acknowledge this.

Early in January the ICRC told the families that their relatives were in Israel, but that it had no access to them. The families believe that the six may be held either in Ashkelon or Sarafed prison.

The six, all Muslim, are: Hussein Ahmad, a worker in a shoe factory aged 25; Hussein Rumayti, a worker in a glass shop

aged 29; Ahmad Taleb, a sailor aged 25; Ahmad Jallul, another sailor aged 26; Ghassan Al Dirani, a bank employee aged 26; and Hussan Tlayes.

Amnesty International opposes the detention of prisoners of conscience — people held solely for the non-violent exercise of their basic human rights — in all circumstances. It opposes the detention of other political prisoners unless they have received a fair and prompt trial.

In its letter to Mr. Shamir, Amnesty International said it is concerned at the continued incommunicado detention of the six detainees. It called for their immediate and unconditional release unless they have been convicted of a recognisably criminal offence. Amnesty International asked for details of any charges or any trial proceedings. It also asked that they be allowed access to a humanitarian organisation such as the ICRC.

In light of these cases, Amnesty International also said it was concerned that other people detained by the Lebanese Forces or other Lebanese militias may currently be secretly held in Israel.

Iran names ambassador to S. Arabia

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran appointed an ambassador to Saudi Arabia Tuesday, upgrading recently resumed relations that put an end to years of acrimony between the two giants of the Muslim World.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), monitored in Nicosia, said Mohammad Ali Hadi's appointment was proposed by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and endorsed by President Hashemi Rafsanjani.

At Mr. Rafsanjani's behest, Mr. Velayati has been working to improve Tehran's ties with all Arab countries, and the West.

Following the resumption of Tehran's relations with Morocco earlier this month, Egypt remains the only Arab country without formal diplomatic ties with Iran.

The reestablishment of full relations with Saudi Arabia presages greater economic cooperation between Tehran and Riyadh, the biggest oil producers inside the 13-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

A 23-man Iranian team, the largest to visit Saudi Arabia since the two countries resumed ties in March, explored avenues of economic cooperation with Saudi officials earlier this month.

Iran has also been trying to forge a security pact with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which comprises Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

But apart from statements of support, there have been no efforts by the Arab states to grant Iran a role inside the GCC.

Before he died of cancer in June 1989, Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the hardline patriarch of the 1979 Islamic revolution, had singled Saudi Arabia as one of Iran's principal enemies inside the Islamic World.

Relations between the two countries hit bottom in July 1987 when 402 people mostly Iranians on the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, were killed in clashes with Saudi police.

Ayatollah Khomeini said at the time that he could forgive Iraq's Saddam Hussein, who was waging a bloody war against Iran, but never Saudi King Fahd.

U.N. plans major relief, peace efforts for Somalia

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said Monday the United Nations would launch a large-scale humanitarian aid project for Somalia if combatants in the civil war stopped fighting.

He did not give figures but U.N. sources said the World Food Programme and the U.N. Children's Fund were organising \$12 million worth of supplies for a 90-day period, including field hospitals and ships loaded with food and medicines stationed off the Somali coast.

Relief operations in Somalia were curtailed after the murders of an International Red Cross delegate in December and a U.N. doctor in the northern port of Bossaso earlier this month.

An estimated 20,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed and wounded since a power struggle broke out on Nov. 17 between rival warlords Mohammed Farah Aided and Ali Mahdi Mohammad.

At the same time Security Council members were consulting on a resolution which would call for peace and prepare the groundwork for a more active Security Council role in future.

African states have been meeting on a possible resolution, hoping that the promise of increased assistance would serve as an inducement for peace.

According to the sources, the council could, if warfare stopped, eventually send in a peace-keeping force along with the Organisation of African States (OAU), whose Secretary-General Salim Salim conferred with Dr. Ghali Monday.

Calls for an international peacekeeping force to secure relief assistance and create a neutral zone around hospitals, the port and airport have been increasing since the failure of U.N. and OAU efforts to bring warring sides to a truce.

But it is by no means certain the combatants will agree as evidenced by deliberate shooting of the aid workers.

The impoverished Horn of Africa nation has virtually collapsed as a state and is carved up into several tribal territories.

In his statement, Dr. Ghali, an Egyptian and the first secretary-general from the African continent, said the escalating violence in the Somali capital of Mogadishu had "growing implications for the Horn of Africa."

"The secretary-general wishes to reaffirm the link between a stable situation in Somalia and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy populations," he added.

"Arrangements are now being drawn up by U.N. agencies to launch large scale humanitarian assistance programmes once the parties agree to end hostilities," he said.

Iran's foreign minister visits Ukraine

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati flew to Ukraine on Tuesday on his first visit to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. Mr. Velayati would hold talks in Kiev with President Leonid Kravchuk and other Ukrainian officials during his two-day visit. IRNA said. The two countries would soon open embassies in Tehran and Kiev, the agency said, adding that Ukraine could be a good market for Iranian products and there were prospects for joint projects in energy, steel and machine tool industries. Some Western countries have expressed fears Tehran could be seeking weapons from the ex-Soviet republics to build up its military power in the Gulf. "Obviously there is some concern over Iran's seeking of Soviet submarines," British Defence Secretary Tom King told a news conference in the United Arab Emirates on Monday. Earlier this month Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the West had no business questioning Iran's arms programmes. Mr. Velayati visited Moscow and the six-Muslim-dominated ex-Soviet republics early in December before the Soviet Union was officially dissolved. Other Iranian officials have visited the Muslim republics and opened Iranian embassies in Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

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UAE wants lower dependence on expats

ABU DHABI (AP) — Sheikh Sultan Ben Zayed Al Nahayan, the deputy prime minister, called Monday for foreign workers to be replaced by nationals. Sheikh Sultan, addressing a seminar on economic trends for the 1990s, said training of UAE nationals should be the objective of the next development stage in the oil-rich country. "The grand development the country achieved in the field of social and economic development in the past two decades was accompanied by negative phenomena, the main factor of which was reliance on a foreign workforce," said Sheikh Sultan, who is the son of UAE President Sheikh Zayed. He told officials attending the seminar that reliance on the foreigners was justified in the past with the shortage of trained nationals. Sheikh Sultan said that could change now because of an increasing number of UAE graduates and the spread of universities and technical colleges in the Gulf countries. The 20-year-old UAE is one of the richest oil producers and its per capita income is among the highest in the world. The oil boom of the 1970s attracted some six million foreigners from around the world to the sparsely populated, conservative Gulf countries. In the UAE, foreigners make up more than 80 per cent of a population currently estimated at 1.84 million.

Ailing ex-hostage recovers only slowly

NICOSIA (AP) — Former British hostage Jack Mann was still seriously ill with pneumonia Tuesday and not recovering as fast as his doctors hoped, a British forces statement said. The 77-year-old former royal air force pilot became ill Jan. 12 and was flown to Princess Mary's Hospital in the British base at Akrotiri on the southern coast. The latest statement said Mr. Mann "is still seriously ill. His doctors are concerned that, because of his age and previous physical condition before entering hospital, he is not making as rapid a recovery as they hoped. He did, however, have a comfortable night and tests and treatment are continuing." The ex-hostage, who flew fighters during the World War II, settled in the Cypriot capital Nicosia with his wife Sunnie after his release in Lebanon Sept. 24. He had been seized by kidnappers May 12, 1989. After his wartime service, Mr. Mann worked as an airline pilot for Lebanon's national Middle East Airlines, then retired in Beirut.

Sudan said to have seized bishops' letter

ROME (R) — Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist government has ordered the seizure of a public letter by Roman Catholic bishops which accused Khartoum of discriminating against non-Muslims, a religious order said on Tuesday. The headquarters of the Combonian Missionary Order said the bishops who signed the letter were ordered to meet government officials last week but there was no news on the outcome. "This action is a further step in the open persecution of Christianity in north Sudan and a cause of embarrassment for all moderate Muslims around the world," said a statement by the order, which has more than 200 missionaries in Sudan. According to what the order said was a confidential memo of Sudan's security services, the government said the letter "violates national security and provokes civil strife." It ordered the bishops to hand over all copies of the pastoral letter, which had statements by the government that there was no discrimination in Sudan were false. "It is very evident that present government policies are aimed at creating one nation, a nation that is Islamic in religion and Arab in culture, in total disregard of the large number of Sudanese citizens who are of other faiths and cultures," the letter said. Last March, Khartoum introduced a new penal code derived from Islamic Sharia law.

Sutherland seeks funds for AUB

LONDON (AP) — Former U.S. hostage Tom Sutherland started a new job Monday as a fundraiser for the American University of Beirut (AUB), where he was dean of agriculture before this kidnapping in 1986. "I'll do this for the next four to six months — and then I hope to go into some academic work," he said. Mr. Sutherland took a day out of a vacation with relatives in Scotland to attend a cocktail reception given by the university's alumni association in London and told some 50 former students that he hopes to return to Beirut when the State Department lifts travel restrictions. During more than six years in captivity, he said, he only cried twice, once last Nov. 9 when he heard on the radio that the university's college hall and the clock tower had been bombed. The first time he cried, he said, was when he heard a song played for him on the BBC world service at the request of his wife Jean. In the coming months, Sutherland said, he plans to talk to about 25 American University of Beirut alumni groups in North America. "I hope to increase the endowment fund and rebuild college hall," he said, estimating that would cost \$10 million. Mr. Sutherland, who remained on the faculty of the university during his captivity despite the appointment of a new dean of agriculture, said Americans thought 100-year-old Stanford University was "a great place." It might well be, but the 150-year-old American University of Beirut was "much more distinguished."

Morocco deports Amnesty member

BRUSSELS (R) — Roland Ginter, a Belgian member of the international human rights organisation Amnesty International, was arrested in Morocco Sunday and deported to Belgium, a spokesman for Amnesty Belgium said on Tuesday.

Philippe Hensmans, an Amnesty spokesman in Brussels, said Mr. Ginter had been in Morocco on a "private initiative" and had no mandate from Amnesty to be there.

Mr. Ginter had been seeing the families of prisoners of conscience during a private visit to Morocco when police arrested him on Sunday afternoon, the Paris branch of the Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Morocco said.

A former political prisoner in Morocco, Tahir Douraidi, alerted Amnesty about Mr. Ginter's arrest which Mr. Douraidi said took place in a suburb of Casablanca.

He was deported to Belgium on Monday, Mr. Hensmans said. Mr. Douraidi said in a statement issued in Morocco that Mr. Ginter had visited him as a friend and not in any professional capacity.

A statement released in Paris by the Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Morocco said: "Ginter acted in every respect in accordance with Moroccan law which stipulates that foreigners have the protection of the host authorities."

"While King Hassan II seeks to give the impression that Morocco is making progress (if under pressure) on human rights, episodes like this prove he does not always practise what he preaches," the association said.

Moroccan law permits free association with anyone, it added.

Morocco has come under increasing scrutiny for its human rights record, especially in France, its former colonial ruler. The publication of a book by left-wing author Gilles Perrault accusing Morocco of jailing and torturing political opponents caused a serious diplomatic rift two years ago, with Rabat demanding the book be withdrawn from sale.

Egyptian judge urges drug trafficker be hanged at crime scene

CAIRO (AP) — A criminal court judge sentenced a jeweller to death for selling heroin and, in an unprecedented move, urged that he be hanged at the scene of his crime outside a social club.

Judge Gamal Abdul Halim Hassan convicted Farouk Yassin Amin, 47, and sentenced him to death. Deterrence would be better served, Mr. Hassan said, if Mr. Amin were hanged "in a closed place" at the spot where he was caught rather than in a prison death chamber.

Legal sources said Judge Hassan's suggestion, addressed to Attorney General Ragaa Al Araby, is unlikely to be accepted. President Hosni Mubarak is on record in opposition to public executions.

Mr. Hassan made his appeal on Monday after Sheikh Mohammad Hassan Tantawy, Egypt's mufti, told him sentencing Mr. Amin to death would not be repugnant to Islam. The mufti, who issues religious rulings, must pass on death sentences, but his opinion is not binding on the judge.

Never before did an Egyptian judge propose a hanging outside prison walls. The action seemed likely to stir controversy.

Mohammad Saeed Al Ashmawy, a criminal court president and Muslim scholar and author, said an outside execution would set "a serious precedent" without "a very compelling reason, such as the non-availability of a prison."

He said conducting executions is "in keeping with the customs and traditions of the Egyptian people, who respect death and do not like it to become a show."

"Executions are the responsibility of the prisons department, which has no jurisdiction outside prisons," said prominent Cairo lawyer Labib Moawad. Accepting Judge Hassan's recommendation would "run counter to the human decency required in an execution."

Mr. Amin was convicted of selling heroin to young people, mostly members of Al Shams Sporting Club in suburban

Helipolis. Investigation showed he dispensed small, paper-wrapped quantities of heroin from his limousine outside the club.

Invoking the law on prisons, Judge Hassan said: "The court recommends and appeals to the attorney general that the penalty be carried out in a closed place at the location where the defendant was seized... in order to achieve the deterrent effect we seek."

The law provides that executions be carried out "inside prisons or in any other closed place on the basis of a written request from the attorney general to the director-general of prisons."

Some Muslim clerics and commentators have campaigned for rules requiring that drug traffickers and rapists sentenced to death be hanged in public squares. Asked about this, Mr. Mubarak said: "No, this would be brutality that is alien to us and to our laws."

To stem smuggling and trafficking in narcotics, particularly powerful drugs like heroin, judges in recent years have opted for the maximum penalty, death. Previously the customary penalty was long prison terms.

Many of the more than 30 prisoners on death row were sentenced of drug charges. They include an Israeli, Yousef Taban. Death sentences are appealed automatically to the court of cassation, the nation's highest. Condemned civilians go to the gallows, military people to the firing squad.

Mr. Amin had been sentenced to life imprisonment twice for drug dealing but escaped.

"Your criminal record is full of sentences. We do not know how you got away, but we know full well that you did not repent," Judge Hassan told Mr. Amin. "You were not daunted by punishment, so you must now go to your God for reckoning."

Mr. Amin told reporters afterwards that he grew up in Cairo's Al Baniya district, notorious for drug trafficking. He said he had two wives and 14 children.

Levy's trip to China will bring relationship out into open

PEKING (AP) — Formal diplomatic ties between China and Israel — expected to be formed this week — will bring out into the open a relationship that has yielded both sides quiet benefit over the years.

It also will allow China to join in the Middle East peace talks that resume next week in Moscow. Israel reportedly has made recognition a condition for Chinese participation.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy is scheduled to arrive Wednesday morning for a visit that he has said will result in formal ties. Israel has sought ties with China for four decades, but China was unwilling previously because of its championship of the Palestinian cause.

For years, China said Israel would have to withdraw from the territories it seized from its Arab neighbours before relations could be established.

China's new flexibility is part of its growing pragmatism in foreign policy, rooted in a realisation that the narrower its contacts, the less its influence in World affairs. China is especially anxious to expand its influence to help fill the vacuum left by the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and counter what it perceives as a hostile United States.

In keeping with this approach,

British MP says Lockerbie evidence against Syria ignored

LONDON (R) — A British politician has alleged that Britain ignored evidence apparently implicating Syria in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Scotland and was using Libya as the "sole whipping boy" for the attack.

Opposition Labour Party member Tam Dalyell said in parliament on Monday night he had obtained a copy of a report by Scottish police into the blowing up of the airliner over the village of Lockerbie with the death of 270 people.

"This report unambiguously details evidence from the Scottish police which implicates a Syrian-based terrorist organisation,"

Mr. Dalyell, a Scottish member of parliament, said.

Britain and the United States issued arrest warrants last year for two alleged members of the Libyan intelligence service and indicated it was not seeking other suspects.

Responding to Mr. Dalyell's allegations, Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg said investigators had checked out a Syrian lead but found no evidence to justify taking the matter further.

The U.N. Security Council was due to vote on Tuesday on a resolution calling on Libya to surrender the two suspects and pay compensation.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

| | |
|-------|---------------------|
| 18:00 | Le Monde est a Vous |
| 18:15 | News in French |
| 18:30 | Interpique |
| 18:45 | News in Hebrew |
| 19:00 | News in Arabic |
| 19:15 | Teach |
| 19:30 | Voice of the Planet |
| 19:45 | News in English |
| 20:00 | Voices Within |

PRAYER TIMES

| | |
|-------|-----------------|
| 05:10 | Fajr |
| 06:30 | (Sunrise) Dhuha |
| 11:47 | Dhuhr |
| 14:39 | Asr |
| 17:04 | Maghrib |
| 18:24 | Isha |

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetlich, Tel. 810740

Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 645990

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823624, 654922

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

It will be partly cloudy to fair and windy will be light and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Amman | 3 / 11 |
| Aqaba | 10 / 20 |
| Deir | 2 / 13 |
| Jordan Valley | 10 / 19 |

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 8, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings: Amman 93 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Dr. Bassim Ouddoumi | 646024 |
| Dr. Abdul Majed Sheri | 791405 |
| Dr. Ahmad Suneim | 752118 |
| Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun | 783708 |
| Firas pharmacy | 661912 |
| Ferdous pharmacy | 783336 |
| Al Asana pharmacy | 637055 |
| Nairoch pharmacy | 623672 |
| Al Salama pharmacy | 636730 |
| Yacoub pharmacy | 644945 |
| Shamsani pharmacy | 637660 |

IRBID:

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Dr. Ahmad Abu Baker | (—) |
| Al Shams pharmacy | (275825) |

ZARQA:

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Dr. Hisham Hiyasat | (—) |
| Khalifeh pharmacy | 985417 |

EMERGENCIES

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Food Control Centre | 637111 |
| Civil Defence Department | 661111 |
| Rescue | 630341 |
| Civil Defence Emergency | 199 |
| Fire Brigade | 991228 |
| Blood Bank | 751211 |
| Highway Police | 643402 |
| Traffic Police | 896390 |
| Public Security Department | 630721 |
| Hotel Complaints | 605800 |
| Price Complaints | 661176 |
| Water and Sewerage | (—) |

Complaints 897467

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

HOSPITALS

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Amman Municipal | 773111 |
| Radio Jordan | 774111 |
| Water Authority | 680100 |
| Jordan Electricity Authority | 813615 |
| Electric Power Company | 636381 |
| RJ Flight Information | 08-53200 |
| Queen Alia Intl. Airport | 08-53200 |

ZARQA NATIONAL HOSPITAL (09)900560

IBN SIN HOSPITAL (09)986732

AL HIKMA MODERN HOSPITAL (09)909990

IBRD:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Pinna Basma Hospital | (02)225555 |
| Greek Catholic Hospital | (02)227275 |
| Al Al-Nasr Hospital | (02)247100 |
| AQABA: | |
| Pinna Hays Hospital | (03)314111 |

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| 09:00 | Damascus (RJ) |
| 09:00 | Jeddah (RJ) |
| 09:30 | Dhahran (RJ) |

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

| | |
|-------|--------------------------|
| 09:30 | Larnaca (RJ) |
| 09:30 | Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ) |
| 10:00 | New York, Amsterdam (RJ) |
| 10:30 | Istanbul (RJ) |
| 10:00 | Madrid, Rome (RJ) |
| 10:00 | Paris, Geneva (RJ) |
| 10:15 | London, Brussels (RJ) |
| 10:15 | Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ) |

08:15 Beirut (ME)

10:25 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

13:00 Cairo (MS)

13:00 Sanaa (Y)

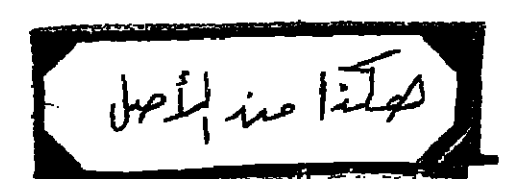
14:00 Benghazi (LN)

21:20 Karachi (PK)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Apple (red) | 700 / 700 |
| Apple (yellow) | 500 / 500 |
| Banana | 500 / 450 |
| Banana (Mukammur) | 550 / 500 |
| Beans | 550 / 500 |
| Cabbage | 170 / 120 |
| Carrot | 220 / 160 |
| Cauliflower | 320 / 260 |
| Cucumbers (large) | 250 / 200 |
| Cucumbers (small) | 600 / 500 |
| Eggplant | 200 / 150 |
| Garlic | 560 / 500 |
| Grapes | 180 / 120 |
| Lemon | 180 / 120 |
| Marrow (large) | 200 / 150 |
| Marrow (small) | 350 / 300 |
| Onion (dry) | 180 / 120 |
| Onion (green) | 180 / 120 |
| Oranges | 420 / 250 |
| Pepper (hot) | 600 / 500 |
| Pepper (sweet) | 460 / 400 |
| Potato | 340 / 300 |
| Radish | 120 / 60 |
| Sage | 600 / 500 |
| Spinach | 200 / 150 |
| Tomato | 420 / 360 |



Crown Prince reviews work of history committee

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, was Tuesday briefed on the progress of work for the special committee of scholars entrusted with the mission by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilization Research (Al Al Bayt Foundation).

The briefing was presented by the foundation's president, Dr. Nassereddin Al Assad, who also outlined the foundation's achievements in the past year and various middle- and long-term projects.

The Crown Prince inspected the latest foundation publications which serve the scholars and researchers in Islamic culture.

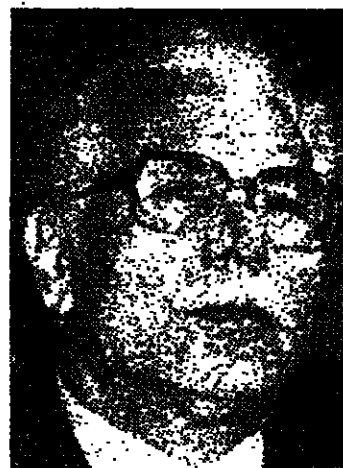
Later, the Crown Prince chaired a meeting for the foundation's council during which a general review was made of the foundation's projects for 1992 and 1993. The Crown Prince stressed the need for the foundation to avail its publications to a larger sector of the readers in Jordan and abroad so that the largest number of scholars can benefit from the foundation's work.

The foundation's publications over the past 10 years have exceeded 120 books while the higher committee for writing Jordan's history has so far published nine books on the history of Jordan in the past two years.

The committee writing Jordan's history was created by Prince Hassan upon directives from His Majesty King Hussein. It includes the foundation president and the heads of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), Yarmouk University, the University of Jordan, Mu'ta University and the Jordan University of Science and Technology.

Jerusalem Commission to discuss protection of holy city

AMMAN (J.T.) — The 15-member Jerusalem Commission which is chaired by King Hassan II of Morocco will open meetings Thursday to discuss means of providing protection to the holy city of Jerusalem and its Arab and Islamic character, according to Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif.



Mahmoud Sharif

The meeting will review the general conditions of the city, means of confronting Israel's Judaisation process and the role of the United Nations in safeguarding the city's holy places to combat Israel's measures, said Mr. Sharif upon leaving Amman for Morocco to take part in the commission meeting.

Mr. Sharif said he would also attend an Arab and Islamic foreign ministers conference due in Morocco on Friday, also to dwell on the question of Jerusalem.

King Hassan II will carry the ideas and the outcome of these conferences to a meeting which he plans to hold with the heads of state of countries which have membership at the U.N. Security Council, said Mr. Sharif.

The Jerusalem Commission was set up in 1969 with the purpose of exerting efforts at all levels to protect the sacred status

of the city of Jerusalem and to resist Israel's attempts at Judaising it and changing its Arab character. The commission runs a special fund which draws on contributions from Islamic nations to finance projects designed to protect the character of the holy city.

On the commission are members representing Jordan, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Syria, Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, New Guinea, Indonesia, Iran and Senegal.

Dr. Abdul Majid Abdul Hadi, office director, said that Jordan will be helped to offset all negative elements of the influence and pursue the goal of providing health services for all people by the year 2000.

Noting that Jordan is among the most advanced states in medical-related matters within the Mediterranean zone, Dr. Abdul Hadi said that this is being made possible due to the presence in the Kingdom of highly qualified personnel, a network of health centres and private and public run hospitals equipped with up-to-date medical equipment.

The WHO realises that Jordan is struggling to deal with the large influx of expatriates that are requiring vast resources to cater to their medical needs. The WHO is trying to help the country together with other agencies in health-related matters as best as possible, Dr. Abdul Hadi noted.

Dr. Abdul Hadi pointed out that Jordan succeeded in combating infectious disease through immunisation programmes and through national plans to combat such killing diseases as AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. For its part, the WHO is helping the Health Ministry in primary health care programmes, training medical workers, providing general health services and immunisation plan, Dr. Abdul Hadi said.

Furthermore, Dr. Abdul Hadi said, the WHO is helping local hospitals acquire further medical equipment needed mainly for training doctors and medical workers.

by the government and the facilities it has provided for the returnees, namely changing car plates and driving licences and removing obstacles facing the returnees in following up the issue of compensation to them.

He also lauded His Majesty King Hussein's stands and keenness to provide every possible assistance to the returnees and commended efforts exerted by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the ministers for their help.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Franco de Courten at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the Institute, Jabel Amman.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Ahmad Hananda and Imad Matalqa at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Kamal Jawhari at the British Council.

SEMINAR

- ★ Seminar about "Ambitions, Attitudes and Interests of Students in Different Countries of the World" led by Dr. Mahmoud Qudus of Mu'ta University at the British Council — 4 p.m.

Sharif Zeid discusses Lockerbie affair with Parliament speaker

AMMAN (J.T.) — Arab affairs and the threats posed to Libya over its alleged involvement in the Pan Am crash over Scotland in 1988 were among the topics discussed by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakir and Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat Tuesday.

Dr. Arabiyat, who last week attended a meeting in Tripoli by the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU), which convened specifically to discuss the Pan Am affair and Libya's position, said that he briefed the prime minister on the APU's resolutions in this respect.

Upon returning home from the Tripoli meeting, Dr. Arabiyat said that the APU was strongly

behind Tripoli and is forming delegations to tour various countries in a campaign to support the Libyan stand.

The United States is accusing Libya of being behind the crash and has been launching a worldwide campaign against Tripoli demanding that it hand over those allegedly responsible for the crash to face trial. Libya has adamantly denied any involvement.

Following the meeting held at the Parliament House, Sharif Zeid said that their discussions were within the framework of continued coordination and cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities. The prime minister said that coordina-

tion of stands and efforts was pledged by the government in its policy statement to Parliament.

For his part, Dr. Arabiyat echoed Sharif Zeid's views, noting that they discussed matters of common concern to the two authorities. Everybody believes in coordinated steps and fruitful cooperation for the benefit of the nation, he said.

This meeting enhances the process of democracy and deepens its roots in Jordan, said Dr. Arabiyat. He said that Parliament appreciated continued coordination with the government to safeguard public interest and to find appropriate solutions for various problems.

Committee agrees to greater Jordanian-Syrian cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian-Syrian Public Works and Housing Committee Tuesday wound up its fourth meeting in Amman and decided to hold the next meeting in Damascus in May.

The announcement was made by Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Hayel Surour and his Syrian counterpart, Mohammad Anatabi, who signed the minutes of their deliberations at the conclusion of meetings held at the Ministry of Housing and Public Works.

Mr. Surour said that the two sides have agreed to organise a series of workshops to discuss issues related to housing and roads as well as urban development problems.

One of the workshops, to be held in April, will deal with the

question of improving public services to poor districts and the problem of unorganised housing operations, the minister noted.

He said that the other workshops will be held in the upcoming year to discuss reducing the cost of housing and axial weights on the roads.

Agreement was reached on preparing a unified map for road networks and ways of linking the networks in the two countries, including the Amman-Damascus highways, the minister added.

He said that the two sides agreed on a special mechanism to execute the joint committee's resolutions and to follow up supervision over the coming workshops. Damascus and Amman will also exchange studies and research work and expertise on

matters related to public works and housing, he added.

Before ending his four-day visit to Jordan, the Syrian minister was taken on a tour of the wastewater treatment plants and water projects in Jordan as well as dams and irrigation projects.

At a meeting with Water and Irrigation Ministry Secretary General Mutazz Al Bilbeisi, discussion was directed towards sewerage schemes. Mr. Bilbeisi said 55 per cent of Jordan's residential areas are being served with sewerage networks, and efforts are underway to expand these networks to other regions.

Discussion also covered the ministry's water distribution programmes, especially in the past summer, to meet the needs of the influx of returnees.



Agreements pave way for stronger ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Agreements signed between Libya and Jordan in Amman Monday will open the door for a stronger relationship between the two countries and further agreements on bilateral cooperation in various fields in the future, according to Libyan Minister of Higher Education Dr. Ibrahim Abu Khuzam.

Describing Jordanian-Libyan relations as very strong, the Libyan minister said that the agreements which covered trade, economic cooperation, cultural and labour matters were designed to safeguard the interests of both countries and open the door for their future cooperation at an expanded level.

With these agreements, the two countries have set up a legal framework and paved the ground for stronger cooperation between them at the different levels, the minister said in a statement

before his departure for Tripoli at the end of a six day official visit to Jordan.

The agreements, co-signed by Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour, covered trade, tourism, maritime transport, education, higher education, health, vocational training, information and culture.

Dr. Abu Khuzam said that the agreements will take effect as soon as they have been endorsed by the governments of Jordan and Libya.

During the visit, Dr. Abu Khuzam and his accompanying delegation met Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakir and other ministers and officials. They also toured businesses and industrial companies.

Dr. Ensour and senior government officials were at the airport to bid farewell to the Libyan delegation.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordanian, German cooperation discussed

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Higher Education Awad Khleifat received in Amman Tuesday German Ambassador to Jordan Heinrich Reinert. Dr. Khleifat and Mr. Reinert discussed scope of cooperation between Jordan and Germany in the field of higher education and the prospect of exchanging educational delegations to benefit from German experience in this field. Mr. Reinert voiced his country's commitment to implementing cultural agreements signed between Jordan and former East Germany.

Mayor receives Australian ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Mayor Mohammad Bashir received in his office Tuesday Australian Ambassador to Jordan Robert Bowker and discussed with him cooperation between Amman Municipality and the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC). The two agreed to exchange expertise in scientific and practical fields between the municipality and the AMLC.

NAF extends JD 3.2 m in aid

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) has extended JD 3,184,000 in assistance to needy families in the Kingdom during the past year, according to a statistical study conducted by the NAF. The study said 5,575 cases benefited from the NAF's assistance in 1991. It added that

the fund has extended JD 4,012,500 to 117,644 beneficiaries since it was established. In 1991, the study said, JD 622,473 were extended to needy families in Amman Governorate, JD 423,463 in Irbid Governorate, JD 223,338 in Mafrqa Governorate, JD 344,276 in Karak, JD 141,577 in Tafila, JD 167,066 in Maan, JD 165,560 in Zarqa and JD 178,869 in Balqa.

Water desalination symposium to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — A symposium on the desalination and recycling of sea, underground and waste water will be held in Amman Jan. 25. The two-day symposium, which is organised by the Higher Council of Science and Technology, will discuss five working papers on techniques used in desalinating water, the economic feasibility of the process, the use of chemicals in recycling water, ways of rationalising water consumption and sterilising water.

Pilgrims return, welcomed

AMMAN (Petra) — Pilgrims from Palestinian lands occupied since 1948 arrived in Amman Tuesday from Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia on their way home after performing the lesser pilgrimage. A farewell ceremony was held at Amman International Fair later in the day. Acting Secretary General of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Al Shuheini Kokash delivered a speech at the ceremony in which he conveyed to them the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday chairs a meeting of the board of directors of the Amman Chamber of Industry (Petra photo)

Self-reliance, role of industry key to economic restructuring, Regent says

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's economic restructuring programme is based on adopting self-reliance methods as a means of stimulating the economy and on making industry play a basic role in such a process, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Tuesday.

Self-reliance requires coordinated action among all parties in agriculture, supply, finance, tourism, trade and others, said the Regent at a meeting with the president and board members of the Amman Chamber of Industry.

The regent called on the chamber to set up a specialised work team to prepare proposals and ideas reflecting the true economic situation in Jordan and urged all sectors and departments to exchange information and data that would help achieve self-reliance.

While expressing his views that the national industry has not yet achieved much at the sectoral level, the Regent voiced his appreciation to the Jordanian industrial sector as a whole, especially in coping with the generally difficult economic situation in the

past year.

It is time for the national industry to be represented by the workers themselves besides the members of the board of directors of companies, the Regent said. He suggested that the upcoming Davos International Economic Conference to be held in Amman should see workers among those representing Jordanians. The conference is usually held in Switzerland.

Referring to the general image abroad about investments in the Kingdom, he said that it is not clear and suggested that a task force be set up to promote the image about the investment process in the Kingdom.

With reference to unemployment in Jordan, the Regent said that Jordanian universities and vocational training centres ought to adapt their courses in a manner that would cater to the needs of the labour market, turning out skilled workers and curtailing the problem of unemployment.

Referring to regulations governing industry in Jordan, the Regent said it is time for upgrading laws and regulations and de-

fining the platform for further progress of the industrial sector.

At the outset of the meeting, chamber President Khaldoun Abu Hassan outlined the chamber's achievements over the past year and plans for the upcoming four years. He said that the plan aims at promoting the national industry in its various sectors and calls for the establishment of specialised institutes to promote certain industries and exports in addition to plans for increasing Jordan's participation in Arab or international industrial fairs to promote exports.

Mr. Abu Hassan said that Jordanian industrialists back the government's plans to carry out an economic restructuring programme, but he expressed hope that the government would create a better investment climate so local industries can compete with foreign products abroad.

Present at the meeting was Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour, who said that the industrial sector has submitted very reasonable demands and the government will consider their requests.

Photographs of Jordan to be exhibited in Europe

AMMAN (J.T.) — An exhibition of photographs of Jordan was held at the Galerie de la FNAC in Paris Tuesday under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor and the French minister of tourism.

The exhibition depicted various aspects of Jordan's antiquities and is designed to orient the French public on the various cultures in Jordan over the ages.

Minister of Tourism Yanal Hikmat deputised for the Queen at the opening ceremony, which was attended by representatives of various cultural organisations in the French capital.

The 20 photographs to be exhibited have been taken by Rene

Burri, a Swiss born in 1933 who specialises in photographs of the Middle East. There are 26 galleries de la FNAC with three in Paris and four in Belgium through which to circulate a total of 160 photographs.

An estimated 150,000 people visit each exhibition according to a press release from Queen Noor's office. It said 30 new exhibitions are created each year dedicated to known talents and discovering new ones.

According to the press release, the exhibition will last for one month but will later tour a number of French and Belgian cities for two years.

Jordan participating in Berlin festival

BERLIN (J.T.) — Jordan is taking part in the annual International Berlin Green Week this year, displaying samples of agricultural products in a bid to promote exports in Europe.

The Jordanian pavilion was visited Tuesday by the German minister of agriculture and Jordan's ambassador to Germany, Khaled Madadha, who inspected the various products which include canned food and fresh fruit.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

جريدة الأردن السياسية المستقلة المنشورة بالإنجليزية من المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Creating facts

THE FIRST thing that comes to mind in the context of self-reliance for Jordanians is the glaring gaps in some of our basic industrial structure — most prominently those related to the consumer sector. There are thousands of simple but imported products that Jordanians consume on a regular basis but the net beneficiary in the equation is the foreign manufacturer.

While it is true that the Jordanians are indeed very enterprising and are innovative to explore all avenues for import substitutes, the fact is that there are also many visible and invisible constraints that loom as hurdles whenever one pursues a serious idea. Among them are capital and environmental requirements which, somehow or the other, appear to be applied uniformly with little regard for the necessity of such prerequisites in certain given situations. Of course, that is not to suggest that capital and environmental conditions should be overlooked while the authorities approve new industries. However, there are thousands of small-scale projects that do not need heavy or medium-level industrial support and do not pose any environmental threats. These projects, labelled cottage industries in many Third World countries, could in fact become the backbone of Jordan's economy and contribute to addressing the unemployment problem if properly encouraged and nurtured. Japan has already set an example for the rest of the world in this field and now the Japanese have the lead in the international market in terms of quality and prices.

The idea is to look more closely at the market situation with a view to exploring the feasibility and requirements of labour-oriented small-scale projects which could be launched from one's home and then establish the channels and means to invite the attention of the people to such ventures. Indeed, the entire responsibility should not be shifted solely to the government. The Jordanians owe it to themselves to pick up their own means and ways. But the authorities could go a long way in helping them do it with establishing facts and procedures that preempt the possibilities of projects being rejected on technical grounds.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE WASHINGTON peace talks ended without any fruitful results, with the Israelis openly declaring that they would not comply with the will of the international community or implement the U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Middle East question, said Al Ra'i daily Tuesday. The paper said that backed by U.S. support and in view of the weak Arab stand, the Israelis are insisting to see a total capitulation of the Arab Nation and a peace treaty with the Arab without having to withdraw one inch from the occupied Arab territory. By destroying the Iraqi military might, the U.S.-Israeli alliance hoped to end any resistance on the part of the Arab side in the face of Israel's bid to impose hegemony on the Arab World, said the paper. But it said that the aggression has only succeeded in bolstering Israel's hand in the occupied Palestinian land, prompting Mr. Shamir and his government to mock at U.N. resolutions and the requirements of the international legality. The paper said that the Israelis are building settlements and disregarding any talk about peace based on justice and the exchange of land for land; and it is now up to the United Nations and the world community to see to it that international legality is respected. The paper said that if there is no imposition of any U.N. rule over Israel's behaviour, it should be openly declared that the so-called international legitimacy is nothing but a big lie created by the Americans as a pretext to launch aggression on the Iraqi people.

What will the Bush administration have to say in reply to Yitzhak Shamir's latest statements near Hebron in which he reiterated that the occupied Arab lands are Israeli land and will remain so for ever? asked Sawt Al Shaab daily Tuesday. According to Mr. Shamir, there is no power in the world that can force Israel to abandon one inch of occupied Arab land or halt Israel's settlement programmes, said the paper. The paper said that the Arab parties to the Madrid and Washington peace talks responded favourably to the American invitation to participate in the negotiations with the hope that the talks will lead to a peaceful settlement with the exchange of land for peace. It said that the Arab parties have been displaying extreme patience with Israel and the American administration over these talks which resulted in nothing except further Israeli intransigence. The Bush administration had given promises and pledges to the Arabs that the Israelis will abandon the occupied Arab territories, but nothing has been done and the U.S. administration has showed its total importance, the paper added. Since the very start of the peace process, Israel has been laying mines in the field of negotiations and obstructing every attempt to reach a settlement with the Arabs, the paper said. It said that Mr. Shamir is now reaffirming his government's total rejection of any move to bring about peace based on justice by openly announcing that Israel will remain in the Arab lands for ever. By so declaring, said the paper, Mr. Shamir has driven the last nail in the coffin of the peace process.

Economic Forum

Categories of savings

By Dr. Abdalla Maiki

IT is true that savings are funds used to finance investments. But it does not follow that each country's investments are necessarily financed only from its own savings. Part of any country's investments may be financed by another country's savings or the savings of a combination of foreign countries.

Now when that happens, that is in a situation where part of the investments of a certain country is financed from its own savings and the other part is financed from the savings of other countries, how are we going to differentiate between these two parts? What terms should be used to denote both?

One way is to call that part of our investments, financed from the savings of other countries, "foreign savings." In this case, our own savings will carry the opposite linguistic label, that is national savings. An alternative linguistic approach is to call them "external savings" in which case our savings will be termed "domestic savings."

Two crucial facts must be remembered here. First, the terms "domestic" and "national" savings refer to one thing, that is the savings of Jordan. There is no such thing as national savings that are distinct from or independent of domestic savings. If we financed all our investments from our savings, we would not be in need of any of the two terms, domestic and national, and instead

we would have talked only about savings alone which would refer, as always, to the difference between our current revenues on the one hand and our current expenditures on the other. Thus, in the presence of foreign borrowing, the term "savings," "domestic savings" and "national savings," refer to one thing and in its absence we do not need them at all. In this case, we need only one word, savings. There is only one group of current revenues and one group of current expenditures for any given country and therefore it can have one and only one sort of savings, not three.

Of course, savings of any country can be disaggregated into the savings of the private sector and those of the public sector. They can also be classified into household, corporate and public savings. In these two contexts, we talk about aggregate savings as contrasted with these disaggregates.

So much for the first fact. The second fact is that foreign savings in this context do not refer to the savings of a specific foreign country. As loans to finance our investments may be acquired from, say, 20 countries, foreign savings here refer to savings coming from as many countries. Even if we acquired all related foreign loans from a single country, apparently foreign savings will still not refer to the totality of the savings of that country.

Now, strange enough, the terms "domestic" and "national" savings, which are merely linguistic devices coined to cope with

operational and analytical issues, have been picked up by some people to talk about two different things. This terrible confusion has been facilitated by the presence of two national income aggregates carrying the same notation, namely gross domestic product and gross national product. This is indeed a very deplorable development because it destroys the whole scientific concept of savings, paves the way to draw faulty and illusory conclusions and thereafter provides a pretext to make and justify grossly erroneous economic policy measures, a syndrome which has been observed in Jordan recently. Because we receive foreign aid (grants), our consumption has swollen above our gross domestic product (but not above our disposable income). As a result, some have started to talk about the so-called negative domestic savings and went from there to prescribe strange policy measures.

Very simply, there is no such thing as domestic consumption in our national accounts (nor in those of any other country) which is to be subtracted from our gross domestic product to arrive at domestic savings. Nor is there national consumption to be compared to our gross national product to enable us derive a national savings aggregate. Again, there is only one type of savings for any country, that is the difference between its current revenues and current expenditures.

Cantonising the future Palestinian state

Current settlement drive is dividing West Bank, shifting Green Line eastwards

The following article is reprinted from Challenge, a magazine of Israeli left.

By Roni Ben Efrat

THE Gulf war and the massive Jewish immigration have led Israel to make an unprecedented drive for territorial domination on both sides of the Green Line. Emboldened by its favourable international image and the flood of new immigrants, the government is moving to implement settlement plans which have lain dormant for decades.

It is no secret that the leaders of the state, from both the Labour Party and the Likud, have never been satisfied with the borders drawn up after the 1948 war. For this reason, Israel has still not defined its borders. During the 1967 war an abortive attempt was made to straighten the eastern ceasefire-line and to annex the whole area stretching from Tulkarm south to Qalqilya and Latrun. Indeed, the army successfully expelled the residents of the Latrun-area villages of Beit Nova, Amwas and Beit Yalu, destroying these villages without leaving a trace. But wide public condemnation prevented similar expulsions in the Qalqilya area, and the annexation plan was shelved.

Yigal Alon of the Labour Party, who at separate times headed the Education and Foreign Affairs ministries, wanted Israel to annex the entire Jordan Valley region (Map 1). This would enclose what Israel recognised as its natural hinterland between two long strips: the widened coastal plain on the one side, and the Jordan Valley on the other. The Palestinian population in the West Bank would thereby be isolated from its natural hinterland in the Arab World, Jordan.

Mr. Alon's approach was intended to avoid tampering with the concentrated population in

the West Bank. What drove him was the principle of maximum area, minimum residents. Today this principle is being expressed in the plan of "cantonisation," whose enthusiastic supporters include former Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The plan views the geographic division of the occupied territories, and the new *faits accomplis* created during the occupation, as a foundation for four cantons: the Nabulsi-Jenin area; the Ramallah area to a point north of Jerusalem; the Hebron area to a point south of Jerusalem; and the Gaza Strip (Map 2).

The canton system is in political harmony with the autonomy plan, which foresees the establishment of local districts in Palestine, entitled at most to the right of self-administration. One indication that this approach is being actualised are the travel restrictions imposed on Palestinians since the Gulf war ended, which prohibit holders of West Bank or Gaza Strip identity cards from entering Israel and East Jerusalem. Since Jerusalem is the main transit point for travel within the West Bank, the restrictions effectively divide the occupied territories into three separate regions.

The Likud never accepted cantonisation. It gave the Gush Emunim movement a green light to deliberately establish settlements close to population centres in the heart of the West Bank. The Likud was even more successful than Labour in fulfilling the vision of hinterlands for Israel's two metropolitan centres, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, on the territory of the West Bank.

Greater Tel Aviv

Although Israel has never publicly admitted the fact, the quadrangle between Qalqilya and the settlements of Qudumim, Ariel and Beit Arieh is meant to be a

natural rear for the Tel Aviv area (Map 4). Overpopulation and the high cost of agricultural land are impeding development beyond the city's present boundaries. "We had two choices," declared Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, "to crowd the population into the coastal plain and confiscate tens of thousands of dunams of excellent agricultural land, or to establish model settlements on lovely hillsides in Judea and Samaria, Wadi Ara, the Galilee and the Negev."

The original goal of the Sharon plan was to establish Jewish population centres along two horizontal axes, the trans-Samaritan highway and the Qalqilya road. After more than a decade, Mr. Sharon has moved on to the creation of a new vertical line of settlements between Azzoun and Dier Ballout villages, with the goal of shifting the Green Line eastward. To this end, the latest wave of land confiscations targeted 17,000 dunams between this vertical axis and the Green Line.

The area of the confiscations is sparsely populated and dotted with small villages, which expanded mainly under the British Mandate. Most of the land is rocky, used primarily for grazing rather than cultivation, which is the excuse for it being handed over to the state. Over 1 million dunams all over the West Bank have been confiscated under the same pretext. Of course, international law does not recognise the legality of the annexations, since these lands belong to residents of the occupied territories and the occupying power has no legal right to them. International law also forbids the occupying power from changing the landscape of the territory under occupation.

A tour of the trans-Samaritan highway and the Qalqilya road makes it clear to what extent the Likud government has succeeded over the past decade in laying a

foundation for the development of Jewish satellite cities. The excellent highway system circumvents Arab villages, hiding the legal owners of the land from view. Just before the new road leading to Beit Arieh settlement, there is a massive parking area set aside for vehicles from the territories, which have been prevented from entering Israel since the Gulf war. Workers park their cars there, then take Israeli buses to their jobs in Tel Aviv, and Petach Tikva. Of course, the border is for Palestinians only.

In Beit Arieh, as in all other settlements, the bulldozers are working at full speed and nearby hills are already levelled and ready for what is officially called "extension." This new hinterland has about 30,000 residents, almost equal to the population of the nearby Arab villages, not counting the city of Qalqilya. This is about one-third of the total number of settlers in the territories, outside of Jerusalem.

The settlements are not only residential. Thanks to generous incentives for investors and industrialists, large industrial parks have been and continue to be built here. Ya'akov Feitelman, director of an industrial zone at Barkan, next to Ariel settlement, is quoted in *Ha'aretz* as saying that Barkan now has 80 factories, as opposed to 24 in 1988, and expects to build another 20 by the end of this year. The industrial zone employs about 2,000 people, a number which is expected to double quickly, and total investment exceeds \$300 million. About 45 per cent of the products are for export. To avoid the ban on exporting Israeli products from the occupied territories, *Ha'aretz* reported, the companies are licensed as subsidiaries, and their products are frequently packaged within Israel.

Eradicating the Green Line
Currently Mr. Sharon's aggres-

sive building campaign centres on his "Seven Stars," cities to be built just inside the Green Line which will extend into Israel and the West Bank (Map 3). The cities are located as follows: Sha'arei Ephraim, south of Tulkarm; Tzur Natan, west of Tulkarm; Yarchiv, near Kufi Qassem; Givat Habroshim; Mazor Atika, south of Givat Habroshim; Shoham, next to Beit Nabala; and Modi'in, northeast of Ramleh.

The seven are in varying stages of development. People are already living in Sha'arei Ephraim, Tzur Natan and Modi'in; construction is underway in Ayal and Yarchiv; and Mazor Atika and Shoham are still being planned. The growth of the new cities will be accompanied by the expansion of existing settlements in the area.

The "Seven Stars" plan has important political implications. The settlements are an ideal place for immigrant absorption, since they are part of the metro-politan area of Tel Aviv and at the same time are built on the Green Line.

The land necessary for their expansion is already confiscated from Arab villages in the triangle and across the Green Line. Thousands of dunams were recently confiscated from Dier Ballout for the expansion of Givat Habroshim, for example.

So far there has been no opposition to these plans and their implementation, either from the U.S. government or the Israeli left. Yet it is clear that the construction of new towns just west of the Green Line is only the precursor to eastward expansion.

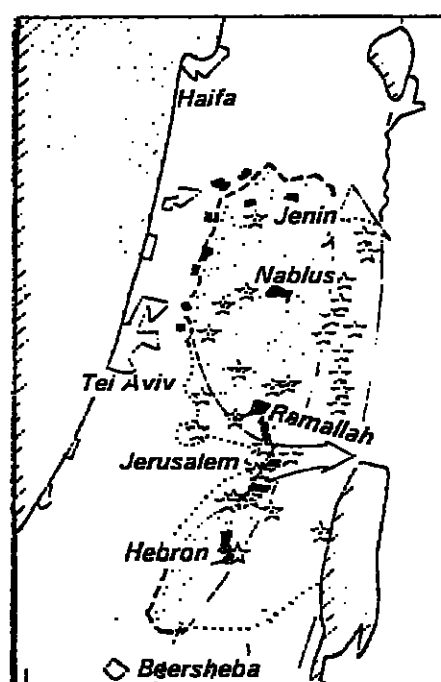
Wadi Ara — Sharon's Achilles heel

In contrast to the gains achieved in other areas, settlement plans for the Wadi Ara area have failed. In a document entitled "The Nahal Eron Project: A Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Eron-Reihan Region," published by the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organisation (WZO), the authors concede that:

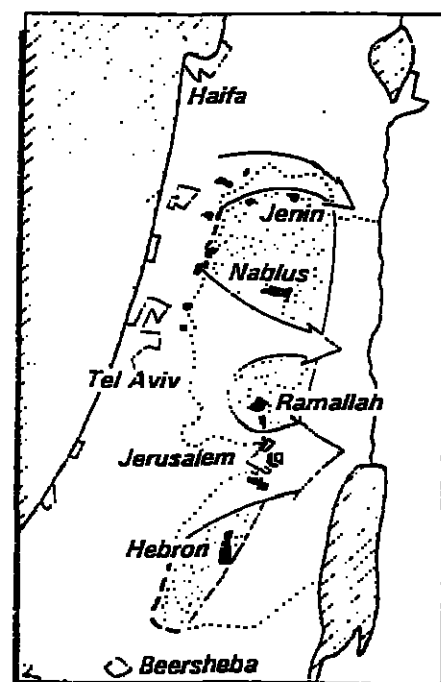
"In spite of a national consensus concerning the development of this area according to the Alon Plan, the area of Nahal Eron remains with a scarce Jewish settlement [sic]. The area of 180 [square] kilometres is inhabited by less than 1,000 Jews, in the heart of an Arab population numbering 160,000."

The Likud government's emphasis on settlement of the territories did not leave room for settlement of this area. Now, however, massive immigration accompanied by generous funding is providing a golden opportunity for the Likud government, with the complete support of the Labour Party, to break the territorial continuity of Arab settlement in this area, which is also a strategic traffic route between Tel Aviv and the Galilee. The goal of the Eron Reihan project is to surround Arab localities in the Wadi Ara area, especially Um Al Fahm, with two belts of Jewish settlement, one within the Green Line and one in the territories (Map 4).

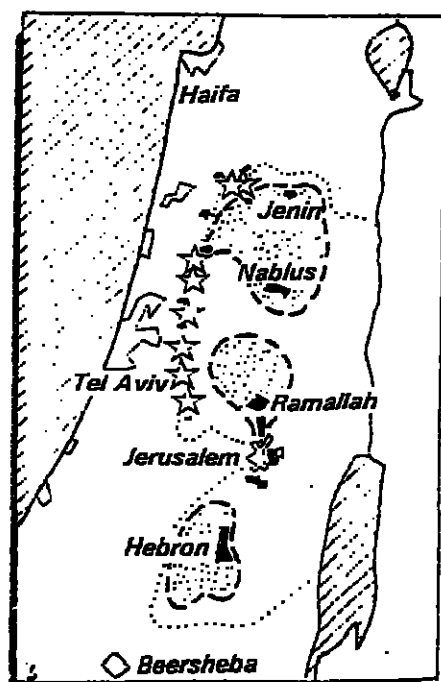
In a section entitled "Goals of the Project," the WZO plan states: "The project is intended mainly (Continued on page 5)



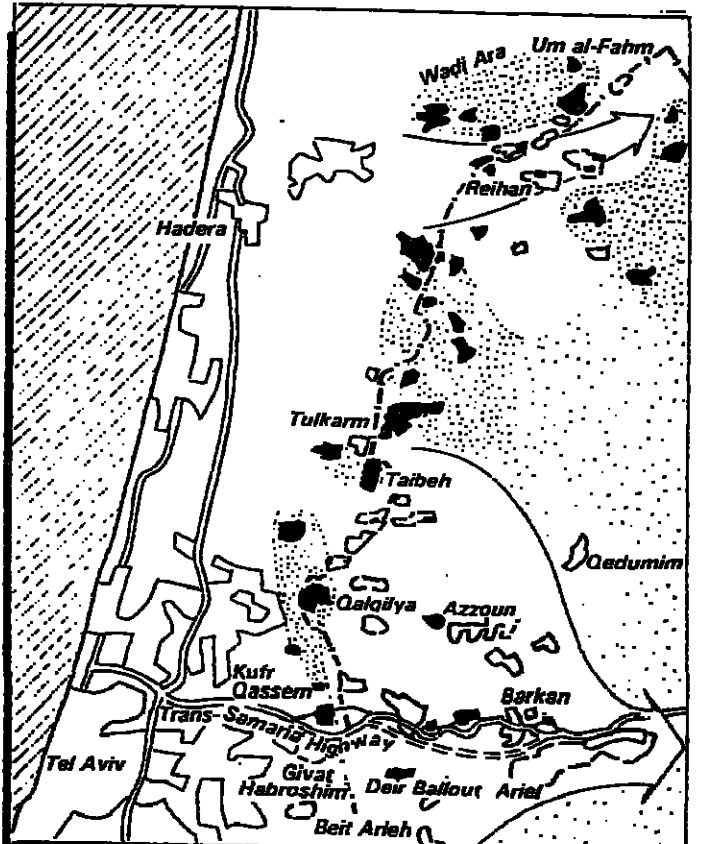
Map 1. The Alon Plan: Between 1967-75 the Jerusalem and Jordan Valley corridors were established (empty stars). The Gush Emunim wave between 1975-77 struck at the heart of the West Bank (stars with dots).



Map 2. Reinforcement: During the 1980's settlement planners focused on consolidating the Jerusalem corridor and creating a new trans-Samaritan corridor to the north.



Map 3. The "Seven Stars": Now under construction, these cities just inside the Green Line will buttress settlements to the east, completing the division of the West Bank into three separate cantons.



Map 4. Pushing East: The Tel Aviv hinterland is being expanded into Wadi Ara and the Tulkarm area. Arab localities are marked in black, Jewish towns and settlements in white.

Albert Glock — an American with us

By Dr. Hanna Nasir

The writer is the departed president of Birzeit University.

BIRZEIT University lost last Sunday afternoon one of its most distinguished professors — Albert Glock, professor of archaeology and head of the Institute of Archaeology at the university. He was shot and killed in the university town of Birzeit by

an unidentified person.

Albert was an American citizen. However, his spirit was Palestinian. He was nicknamed Abu Omar and he enjoyed that name. In fact, I think he chose that name. He was a hard worker, diligent and sincere. His mind was set on training Palestinian archaeologists to that they would compete with the Israelis. He was tough and did not cut edges.

I often met with Albert during his frequent trip to Amman. His pet topic was the development of the Archaeology Institute and the training of its personnel. He also made it a point to visit with some of his ex-students doing graduate work in Jordan and to continue his guidance to them.

He identified a lot with the Palestinian cause. He could see the injustice. He had been living

in Jerusalem for over eighteen years and during this time, he and his wife Lois, developed much compassion for the Palestinian people.

We, at Birzeit, greatly respected Albert and his intellectual integrity. The fact that he was a foreign national was totally irrelevant. His sincerity and dedication were the only criterion for his acceptability — by Birzeit

and by the Palestinian community. They considered him their guest. That is why we think that the murder could not have been done except by enemies of the Palestinian people. As such, the university not only condemns the murder in the strongest possible terms, but implores the United Nations to provide protection for the people under occupation. Albert spent sixteen winter-

months at Birzeit, full with the spirit of giving and dedication. The tragic event has hit us heavily. We will continue to think of Albert and be guided by his dedication. We share the sorrow for his loss with his family and friends. We want them to know that the best condolences we are able to offer, are the promise to continue the work as Albert (Abu Omar) would have wanted it to.

Two-track negotiations ensured

(Continued from page 1)

tantly on the multinational talks scheduled to be held in Moscow on Jan. 28-29.

She said invitation to the Palestinians to attend the Moscow talks was received by the Palestinian delegation members in Washington.

This was done upon directives from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) because the co-sponsors of the talks — the United States and Russia — had failed to hand the invitation to Faisal Husseini, leader of the Palestinian consultative team, Dr. Ashrawi said.

Mr. Husseini refused to receive the invitation because the Moscow meeting will be attended by envoys representing countries and therefore the invitation should go to the PLO, which is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, Dr. Ashrawi said.

She said that the Palestinians from the occupied territories and the diaspora should participate in the Moscow talks.

The Moscow parley would be along the lines of the Madrid conference and the Palestinian delegation would not place preconditions for the negotiations as their contacts and consultations with the Americans are continuing, she said.

But, she noted, a decision to go or not to go to Moscow has not been handed over to the Americans and Russians.

She noted that the reply should come from the PLO.

Answering a question on reports that an Israeli military court rejected a plea by seven Palestinians to be expelled from Palestine, Dr. Ashrawi said the expulsion decisions, together with Israel's escalation of its repressive measures against the Palestinians, were provocative measures practiced by the Israeli government.

The Palestinians do not trust any verdicts by any military courts because the Israeli judiciary serves no justice but Israel's interests, Dr. Ashrawi said.

Russia

(Continued from page 1)

that there would be a meeting on the Moscow round but Egypt said it had received an invitation to discuss coordinating the Arab position on the Russia talks in Morocco on Friday.

The Palestinian News Agency Wafa said Russian officials explained their view in talks this week with Mahmoud Abbas, (Abu Mazen), a member of the PLO's Executive Committee.

"Russian (Foreign Affairs) Minister Andrei Kozirev underlined to Abu Mazen that Moscow wants the multilateral negotiations to take place on its soil, despite the current crisis," the spokesman said.

U.N. demands full role

The United Nations will not attend the Moscow talks unless its status is upgraded to that of a full participant, a U.N. spokesman said Monday.

"The United Nations... would be happy to participate in the forthcoming multilateral meeting of the Middle East peace conference... provided it is invited to attend as a full-fledged participant," said Francois Giuliani, spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

Edouard Brunner, U.N. special envoy for the Middle East, has attended earlier Middle East peace talks as an observer.

Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

Algerians since Mr. Benjedid stepped down.

FIS leaders claim that more than 500 of their supporters, including members of their ruling council of deputies elected to the National People's Assembly, have been arrested since last week.

The official APS news agency reported Monday that police arrested the imam of the Al Maitar Mosque in Boussaada, south of Algiers, on Saturday and charged him with "inciting citizens to revolt against the state from the mosque."

The new leaders were holding crisis talks Tuesday to tackle economic woes fuelling Islamic fundamentalism and discontent.

Headed by Prime Minister Sidahmad Ghazali, the cabinet was to meet on the orders of the regime "to draw up concrete steps to relaunch the economy."

Algerian commentators forecast a ministerial reshuffle, with El Watan newspaper seeing "super-ministries" being formed to try to mastermind fast action to kickstart the troubled economy.

Burdened by debt, Algeria's foreign exchange coffers are almost empty.

Unemployment, particularly among the young, is around 20 per cent and rising. Inflation, officially 22 per cent in the first nine months of last year, pursues and upward spiral.

Jobless youths, lacking hope of a better life, are seen as an easy recruiting target by the FIS.

Le Matin said priority projects included work on a motorway, part of a trans-Maghreb auto-route which would quickly bring 8,000 jobs and create another 80,000 later. Another project was more work on a Mediterranean port in eastern Jijel area, railway extensions, and speeding up the capital's ambitious metro project.

The lynchpin of funding Mr. Ghazali's economic strategy is a hydrocarbon law passed last year

Palestinians set their terms

(Continued from page 1)

Moscow," Dr. Erekat told the Associated Press.

Only Palestinians from the occupied territories have been directly represented in the peace talks since its opening in Madrid last October, while Palestinians from the diaspora and East Jerusalem have been confined to the role of advisors.

But now the PLO believes that it cannot afford to allow the same form of representation that it authorised for the bilateral talks deal with final and permanent solutions.

"The Madrid formula was designed for talks on interim arrangements but the multilateral talks deal with final arrangements and all Palestinians should be represented," Mr. Najjab said.

"The Palestinians should be dealt with as one people. We shall insist this time on the representation of Palestinians in the diaspora and from East Jerusalem."

The PLO official said that the U.S. had so far refused to consider representation of Palestinians in the diaspora and from East Jerusalem.

He warned that the continuity of the same form of participation will drive a wedge between the Palestinian inside the territories and those in the diaspora.

The PLO fears, according to Mr. Najjab, that unless all Palestinians were represented issues like the future of East Jerusalem and the rights of Palestinian refugees displaced in 1967 and 1948 will be tackled inadequately if not totally dropped.

Both issues were supposed to be on the bilateral talks agenda but due to strong Israeli rejections and U.S. reservations, the initial understanding that they will be tackled at the multilaterals — limiting bilaterals to interim arrangements on Palestinian self-rule.

Arafat

(Continued from page 1)

peace talks," Mr. Arafat said. Mr. Arafat said he did not know how the prospect of early elections in Israel would affect the peace process.

"You have to ask them what will happen now after this trouble in their cabinet," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir lost his majority in parliament on Sunday after two small

right-wing parties quit the ruling coalition in hopes of stalling Israeli participation in the peace talks.

Mr. Shamir and his Likud party ministers have indicated they intend to run an election campaign on the twin planks of a tough approach to dealings with Arabs while simultaneously continuing peace talks.

Mr. Arafat also said the United States has not been an "honest broker" in the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Israeli army woos settlers

(Continued from page 1)

tories after Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir vowed to step up settlement building.

Mr. Shamir's right-wing government lost its parliamentary majority on Sunday after the withdrawal of coalition partners over his plans to negotiate interim self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied territories.

A military statement said the army had increased the number of troops in the occupied territories by 20 per cent to curb attacks in which five Israelis have been killed since October.

"On the instructions of the defence minister and the chief of staff, operations of the Israeli army forces in the area of (the West Bank) have been reinforced in recent days," the statement, issued on Tuesday, said.

The army refuses to say how many soldiers it has in the occupied territories.

Israeli security sources said the army measure, which came on orders from Defence Minister Moshe Arens and his chief of staff was intended to calm Jewish settlers and win votes.

Although a minority in Israel's population of some five million, Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip enjoy government support but fear autonomy would lead to a Palestinian state.

Settlers have demanded the resignation of Mr. Arens. Mr.

Shamir's closest ally in the Likud party and have criticised the army for failing to protect them.

Mr. Shamir's government is committed to offering limited autonomy to the Palestinians in the occupied territories as agreed in the Camp David accords of 1978.

The day after the far-right Tehiya and Moledet parties withdrew from the coalition government, Mr. Shamir and other senior cabinet ministers vowed they would continue building in the occupied territories, despite the risk of losing \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees.

Washington, which considers the settlements an obstacle to peace, delayed authorising the guarantees to nudge Israel into landmark peace talks with the Arabs which opened in Madrid at the end of October.

The Israeli government has vowed never to cede an inch of the lands occupied in the 1967 war in return for peace despite U.S. and Arab hopes for such a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. Shamir on Monday kicked off an early election campaign in the West Bank enclave of Betar Illit, telling religious settlers his government was committed to building in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"We see the new building of Betar, the building in all of (the West Bank) and the Gaza Strip

... and no power on earth will prevent this building," Mr. Shamir told cheering settlers.

Settlers in the occupied territories said their numbers could double in a year even if Israel bows to U.S. pressure to halt construction of new settlements.

Spokesman Bob Lang said settlers would oppose but "will live with" an election-year ban on new settlements, saying they could satisfy their goals by expanding 142 existing sites in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Some 25,000 houses are under construction in existing communities, and the average family has five to six members. Simple math shows in a year when all these units are completed, the population (of Jews in the occupied territories) will have doubled," Mr. Lang told Reuters.

"We know that America has linked loan guarantees to building of Jewish communities (in the occupied territories) and we know there's a lot of politicking going on as we get near elections," Mr. Lang said.

He said government policy already restricted settlers to expanding the existing sites dotting the occupied territories.

Bowing to far-right demands, the government agreed to spend most of the 1992 housing budget on Jewish settlement in the occupied territories. Of 7,500 housing units in the budget, 5,000 are to go on land seized in the 1967 war.

Cantonising Palestine

(Continued on page 4)

ly to increase the Jewish population of the region to a significant extent within a given period.

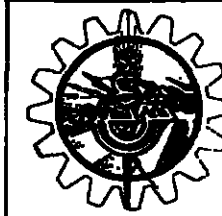
This goal will be attained in the most efficient manner by the deployment of a settlement pattern composed of a cluster of rural community settlements to be developed around an urban centre (with a population of about 12,000) and serving as the focal point of the region in both geographic and financial terms. This will allow a proper and efficient functioning of the whole settlement system, despite the current and projected discrepancy between the Jewish and the Arab population. This urban centre will grow into a link between Eron Region and Reihan Region by virtue of its location and functions in such fields as employment and services."

Among the other goals of the project is "promotion of a spirit of local identity and relief of the feeling of isolation."

"Thus, at the same time that Ariel Sharon's bulldozers in the occupied territories are subject to condemnation, his actions inside the Green Line fall within the national consensus, acceptable to both left and right. This division is artificial and harmful for two

reasons. First, settlement activity in the occupied territories and settlement activity along the Green Line and in Wadi Ara are two sides of the same coin. Their goal is to erase the Green Line and to delay indefinitely opportunities for political negotiations. Second, both types of settlement activity are the product of the same racist perspective which views Palestinians, whether they live in the occupied territories or Israel, as residents with no rights to their own land.

The political ramifications of settlement on either side of the Green Line are disastrous. In the occupied territories, Israel does not recognise the right of the Palestinian people to its own state, and has simply pirated its land, water and possessions for the last 24 years. In Israel, where the Arab population has no claim to independence, official policy continues to treat Arab citizens as a security risk which must be neutralised, and as conditional citizens. Jewish immigration is being used to strengthen this policy of apartheid against the Arab population in Israel, and to generate geographic and demographic facts in the occupied territories which will hinder any peace settlement.



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Tel. No.: 666165/6 - Amman
665116 or 03-377121-Site

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| Currency | New York Close Jan 20/1/92 | Tokyo Close Jan 21/1/92 |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sterling Pound | 1.7990 | 1.8033 |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.5905 | 1.5885 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.4098 | 1.4080 |
| French Franc | 5.4325 | 5.4110 |
| Japanese Yen | 123.25 | 123.45 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.2825 | 1.2855 |

USD Per STU
European Opening to 10:00 a.m. GMT

| Currency | 1 MTH | 3 MTHS | 6 MTHS | 12 MTHS |
|------------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 4.02 | 4.06 | 4.06 | 4.31 |
| Sterling Pound | 10.43 | 10.37 | 10.25 | 10.12 |
| Deutsche Mark | 9.43 | 9.43 | 9.31 | 9.12 |
| Swiss Franc | 7.62 | 7.62 | 7.56 | 7.56 |
| French Franc | 9.75 | 9.75 | 9.62 | 9.46 |
| Japanese Yen | 5.37 | 5.18 | 4.93 | 4.87 |
| European Currency Unit | 10.25 | 10.19 | 10.06 | 9.81 |

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1.0 million S.D. or equivalent.

| Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm | Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Gold | 357.8 | 6.85 | Silver | 4.27 | .093 |

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| U.S. Dollar | .676 | .678 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.2761 | 1.2222 |
| Deutsche Mark | .4299 | .4270 |
| Swiss Franc | .4800 | .4824 |
| French Franc | .1246 | .1252 |
| Japanese Yen | .5475 | .5500 |
| Dutch Guilder | .3775 | .3794 |
| Swedish Krona | .1168 | .1174 |
| Italian Lira | .0564 | .0567 |
| Belgian Franc | .02057 | .02067 |

Per 100

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Bahraini Dinar | 1.7640 | 1.7720 |
| Lebanese Lira | .0768 | .0775 |
| Saudi Riyal | .1799 | .1810 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | .1831 | .1844 |
| Omani Riyal | .1831 | .1844 |
| UAE Dirham | .1831 | .1844 |
| Greek Drachma | .3630 | .3740 |
| Cypriot Pound | 1.5025 | 1.5130 |

Per 100

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

| Index | 19/1/1992 | Close | 20/1/1992 | Close |
|------------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| All-Share | 133.92 | | 133.40 | |
| Banking Sector | 110.07 | | 109.74 | |
| Insurance Sector | 132.01 | | 131.49 | |
| Industry Sector | 168.90 | | 168.13 | |
| Services Sector | 151.51 | | 150.65 | |

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| One Sterling | 1.7995/8005 | U.S. dollar | 1.1534/39 |
| One U.S. dollar | 1.5890/5900 | Canadian dollar | 1.7895/7905 |
| | 1.4093/4103 | Deutsche marks | 32.66/70 |
| | 5.4160/4210 | Dutch guilders | 1196/1197 |
| | 123.75/85 | Swiss francs | 123.75/85 |
| | 5.7810/60 | French francs | 6.2400/50 |
| | 6.1610/60 | Italian lire | 6.1610/60 |
| One ounce of gold | 357.10/357.60 | Japanese yen | 168.13 |
| | | Swedish crowns | 168.13 |
| | | Norwegian crowns | 168.13 |
| | | Danish crowns | 168.13 |
| | | U.S. dollars | 168.13 |

Chamber of Commerce chairman outlines constraints and controls hindering Jordan's development

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Although Jordan has witnessed economic difficulties in recent years, hardened by high numbers of returnees coming back to the country, the increasing rate of unemployment and the inaccessibility to foreign aid, 1992 should be a year in which other factors, that hinder the development process in the country, should be looked into, according to Mohammad Asfour, chairman of the Jordan Chamber of Commerce.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, one of the elements Mr. Asfour pointed towards was increasing the taxation base with regards to consumption while reducing the rates of customs fees along with restraining the wide range of tariffs.

Question: Can you define Jordan's economic activity as it stands now?

Mr. Asfour: The economic activity in Jordan is marked with serious perseverance. Indeed, Jordan has struggled against all forms of underdevelopment over the past few decades. However, it is the present and future task of Jordan not only to remove the remnants of backwardness or achieve socio-economic development, but also to overcome the internal and external economic disequilibrium which resulted from the development process. Thus, the question is no longer that of achieving an intended rate of growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), or narrowing the gap in the trade balance, increasing the domestic revenues of the treasury or improving the performance of the government services and consolidating the infrastructure. These issues have been taken for granted and have been adequately discussed and redressed. The question is that of the changes which inflicted further constraints and controls on the development process.

Q: Can you elaborate on this?

Mr. Asfour: Having started the implementation of the economic adjustment programme, Jordan is in such a situation where it is seeking socio-economic development and facing a demographic immigration and a sharp increase in unemployment. Furthermore, Jordan is no longer capable of easily securing financial aid and there is a structural imbalance in the internal and external economic environments.

Q: In view of these challenges, what are the priorities of the economic activity going to be this year?

Mr. Asfour: To provide

answers for this question, we need to review briefly some of the overall economic variables, particularly highlighting the commercial factor and the role it will play at this state. By the same token, it will be useful to raise a few questions so that the economic course of action to be followed will be determined in light of our answers.

Firstly, how much is the increase in investments required to attain a rate of growth in the GDP which will lead to a real rise in the per capita income and, simultaneously, curtail unemployment?

Secondly, what is the size of the domestic savings required to undertake these investments? As far as the size of investments is concerned, it is inevitable to bring about a rise in the rate of the private sector investments to the total investments. In other words, there must be an accelerated increase in the rate of the private sector investments in comparison with the public sectors.

Having tackled the structure of investments or their distribution between the private and public sectors, the size and ratio of these investments to the GDP should be boosted. The fact that this ratio has been frozen for several years and ranges between 18-20 per cent is not a positive indicator and therefore, growth to the aspired level is required.

Q: Do you believe the taxation system should be re-assessed in view of economic developments?

Mr. Asfour: It will be imperative in 1992 to take a further step on the way of enlarging the taxation base on consumption and reducing the rates of customs fees along with restraining, as much as possible, the wide range of tariffs. Indeed, the implementation of this will be a positive and tangible step toward a re-assessment and reform of the taxation system in order to further adapt to the economic accomplishments and to the renewals and variables of economic development.

Q: How, then, do you evaluate the prospects for this year's economic activity?

Mr. Asfour: It is imperative to focus on the nature and impact of the commercial sector activities together with the standard of this sector's performance. Like it or not, it is the commercial sector that embraces the other economic sectors and activities and is involved in every productive process.

The commercial sector represents vital means for linking the national economic fabric and is an essential medium for activating

ing the sectorial integration and reinforcing the links among the national economic sectors.

Is so doing, it becomes essential as it connects Jordan with the outside world especially that increasing the foreign trade transaction is of utmost importance for achieving economic equilibrium. Moreover, the free movement of goods and services and the provision of incentives for exports, transit, movement of goods through free zones and the imported raw materials and the necessary food supplies are all issues and even constants which cannot be by-passed without due consideration.

1992 cannot but constitute a turning point toward further economic openness, market oriented economy, removal of administrative barriers, reduction of routine procedures, adoption of the supply and demand mechanism, promotion of patterns of internal competition and exposure of the local market to foreign competition. Those are the features of the economic status quo on the international arena and of contemporary progress and development.

We cannot permit ourselves to lag behind or overlook this concepts. In fact, we are not only about to see 1992 confirming these concepts as solid landmarks on the way of future economic trends, but we should also make sure that these concepts will be accompanied by a serious effort intended to adjust to the very economic structures pertaining to these concepts.

It has become absolutely necessary to focus on increasing the exports of manufacturing industries and their growing relative importance to the total exports. It is also necessary for this increase to be accompanied by furthering the elasticity of these industrial exports to the GDP. As a matter



Mohammad Asfour

of fact, the current criterion of elasticity does not show these exports to be in a healthy situation.

Q: What would be a way of getting around this? How can this be solved?

Mr. Asfour: It is inevitable to reduce the elasticity of imports of goods in terms of the GDP since the existing elasticity is very high. It must also be noted in this regard that 1992 should not witness an increase in money similar to what the past year has witnessed. It is worthwhile to point out that a change in the money supply does not in itself pose a negative sign providing that this change is linked and goes hand in hand with the increase in the GDP, the size of trade transactions and the rapid flow of money.

The absence of harmony among the pillars of this formula will lead to certain economic setbacks which we should attempt to evade. Hence, the year 1992 must be sensitive of the pillars of this formula and avoid any negative impact resulting from an increased money supply, in the event that these appear to be basic features of the economic prospects of 1992.

Those features and characteristics will remain a matter of opinion unless 1992 proves to be the time for laying down the guidelines for a national development strategy which will determine the priorities of our national economy based upon a comprehensive socio-economic plan which we hope will be initiated in 1992.

Criticism delays Kuwait debt settlement plan

KUWAIT (R) — Public criticism has delayed Kuwait's plans to buy about \$20 billion of domestic bad debt from commercial banks, bailing out influential debtors.

The plan, approved by Kuwait's cabinet one month ago, has come under fire from its partially elected National Council as well as independent economists who say it will put too much pressure on the emirate's already heavily burdened treasury.

National Council chief Abdul Aziz Al Masead said in remarks published Tuesday the body's joint economic and legislative committee would review the issue closely and submit its views in March "because of the enormity of the size of the debts."

The council has no legislative power to block the programme but economists say its opposition has delayed implementation. "The government is in a defensive position — it has realised that public opinion is against it (debt buyout) and as long as they feel this they won't go ahead," said Jassim Al Saddoun, an economist with the Al Shail think-tank.

There have been weeks of media debate about the programme, which will allow the government to purchase the debt by issuing bonds with a maximum 20-year maturity.

The Kuwait Economic Society, grouping prominent economists and bankers, has said it opposed implementation before allowing an independent auditing committee to classify the debts.

Central Bank governor Salem Abdul Aziz Al Saud Al Sabah has spearheaded an official media campaign to explain the need for the programme, which he says will save troubled banks from collapse and reactivate the post-war economy.

"If this problem is not solved Kuwait will truly face an economic catastrophe... many depositors would face bankruptcy as a result of bankruptcy of the banks," he said recently.

Critics are not against the principle of the plan, but the way in which it is to be carried out. They complain that many of the estimated 6,000 debtors have hidden assets abroad and if the banks took them to court they would be forced to pay up.

Recovering the money from individual debtors will be difficult and many critics believe that — despite denials to the contrary — the government is likely to write off the whole amount in two or three years time.

Issuing the bonds, with a maximum 20-year maturity, will also take the government to the limit of a 10 billion-dinar (\$34 million) public borrowing ceiling set in July.

Economists say Kuwait already has three billion dinars (\$11 billion) worth of outstanding treasury bills and bonds.

It signed a \$5.5 billion credit with international banks in December to cope with post-war defence and reconstruction costs. Its budget deficit is expected to hit a record \$18.29 billion in fiscal 1991-1992.

Bankers say the government has sold off about half the assets in its \$70 billion overseas "Reserve Fund for Future Generations" to pay the U.S.-led coalition which drove Iraqi forces out of the emirate last February.

"We are in a critical position — we should not put more financial burden on the country because of the debt and all of us will be losers," said Saddoun, a prominent government critic.

Saudi Arabia cuts oil output

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, said Tuesday it cut its oil production by 100,000 barrels per day (b/d).

"Saudi Arabia, out of its desire to maintain balance between supply and demand on the oil market, has decided to reduce its output by 100,000 barrels per day (b/d) starting immediately," Oil Minister Hisham Nazer was

quoted as saying by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

Saudi Arabia had been pumping an estimated 8.35 million b/d, excluding its output from the Neutral Zone shared with Kuwait.

The Saudi announcement of a cut of nearly 1.2 per cent followed similar pledges from six other OPEC countries to help shore up falling prices.

"We hope that by taking this measure, things will return to normal," Sheikh Nazer was quoted as saying by SPA, monitored in Cyprus.

"I see no justification for a sharp drop in market prices since figures published about the volume of production of OPEC countries are higher than what is actually being produced," Sheikh Nazer told SPA.

Oil prices have been weak due to sluggish demand and high output by the 13 OPEC members.

Earlier Tuesday Qatar, one of OPEC's smallest producers with output of about 350,000 b/d, said it was cutting production by 10 per cent.

OPEC members Venezuela, Libya, Nigeria, Algeria and Iran earlier pledged to cut production by a total of 200,000 b/d.

Athens tightens economic policy

ATHENS (R) — The Greek government presented a tight economic policy for 1992 Monday, saying recovery must be speeded up to enable Greece to join the planned single European Community (EC) market.

"The government decided after the Maastricht (EC) summit that the Greek economy must follow a faster course of adjusting to new facts," a joint statement from the finance and national economy ministries said.

It said 1992 would be a tough year, with no pay rises for state workers and higher rates for public utilities. But there would be big breaks on income tax, balanced by a one-time special tax on property owners.

"The government estimates that the Greek economy will begin to enter recovery at the end of

1992 or the start of 1993," the statement said.

It said that although economic indicators had improved in 1991, it was necessary to make more measures to cut inflation — 17.8 per cent in 1991 — and big state deficits further.

The conservative government wants to achieve single-digit inflation in 1993 and to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement to three per cent of gross domestic product by 1996 from

14.5 per cent at present.

About 104,000 public sector employees will receive no pay rise in 1992 but will get an 18,000 drachma (\$100) allowance in two instalments. Pensioners will get two three-per-cent increases in January and July.

Public utility rates will rise by up to seven per cent but post office charges and domestic fares of state-controlled Olympic Airways would increase by 15 per cent.

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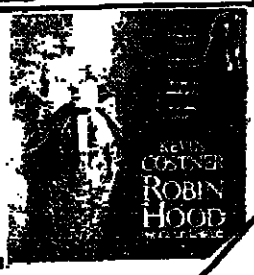
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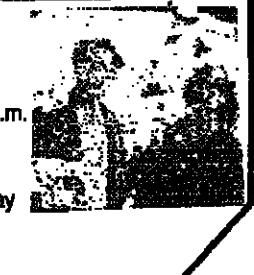
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87 feared dead in French Airbus crash

MONT SAINTE-ODILE, France (R) — A baby girl and a young boy were among only nine people believed to have survived when a French Airbus with 96 people on board crashed into mountains in eastern France.

Hundreds of rescue workers spent the night pulling bodies from the wreckage of the plane, a domestic flight from Lyon to Strasbourg that plunged into a wooded hillside in snow and freezing fog five minutes before it had been due to land.

They said some passengers on the Air Inter A320 had cried out for help, then died of cold before they could be reached. Because of the bad weather it took nearly five hours to locate the wreckage.

"It smelled of burned flesh, it smelled of death," said radio reporter Fabrice Pierrebouge, one of the first people to reach the site on the slopes of Mont Sainte-Odile, 50 kilometres south of Strasbourg.

Rescue workers said only a tiny piece of fuselage remained intact and pieces of debris were strewn through the forest. Hearses loaded with body bags waited on the nearest road, 20 minutes' walk from the crash site.

As day broke, none of the bodies had yet been taken from the crash site.

Initial reports said the survivors included a baby girl of 13 months, a nine-year-old boy and his mother. Most of the passengers were business travellers, the airline said.

Some 850 troops and paramilitary gendarmes, backed by helicopters and a fighter plane with infra-red detectors, combed the area. Rescue workers had to take to the crash site on foot.

Trembling with cold and stamping their feet, police blocked off all approaches to curious onlookers.

Air controllers said flight IT5148 suddenly disappeared from radar screens and lost radio contact with the Strasbourg Control Tower without warning at 7.20 p.m. (1820 GMT).

The plane's beacon did not function, making it harder to find the crash site.

"It was very sudden, just a few seconds," one survivor told French Radio from his hospital bed. "I found a hole and managed to climb... But with the cold there was a moment when I had lost all hope."

All the survivors had been sitting at the back of the plane, Air Inter said.

The airline's chairman Jean-Cyril Spinetta said he had no immediate explanation for the disaster.

The plane, made in 1988, had cleared a thorough security inspection Monday morning and the pilot and co-pilot had 12,500 hours of flying experience between them, he said.

French Prime Minister Edith Cresson sent a telegram from Rome offering her condolences to families of the victims. Air France, the state carrier that owns Air Inter, said it was stunned.

Transport Minister Paul Quilès was on his way to the site. He has ordered an inquiry into the cause of the accident.

It was the third crash of an A320 since the ultra-modern twin-engine plane, manufactured by the four-nation European consortium Airbus Industrie, was introduced in 1988. Some 200 of the planes are in service worldwide.

In June 1988, an Air France Airbus on a demonstration flight with no passengers aboard crashed at an airshow, killing three people. An investigation concluded the pilot had been flying dangerously low and the plane's systems were not at fault.

In February 1990, an Indian Airlines plane crashed at Bangalore Airport, killing 90. Indian authorities briefly grounded all Airbus, but the inquiry blamed the accident on a pilot error.

Xavier Barral, an experienced A320 pilot, told French Television the Air Inter plane had been flying far too low.

He said the Airbus had an early warning system that would sound an alarm in the cockpit if the plane was flying too close to the ground.

Mr. Spinetta later told French Radio One of the Airbus's two flight recorders had been recovered.

"The inquiry has begun... It's important to collect pieces of evidence as quickly as possible," he said.

Mr. Spinetta was confident the results of the inquiry would not reflect badly on the performance of the Airbus. He did not specify whether he thought pilot error was to blame for the crash.

Havana executes convicted exile Cuba: No room for opposition while U.S. hostility remains

HAVANA (R) — Cuba's Communist government, defending the execution of a rightist Cuban exile, said Tuesday it would tolerate no opposition as long as the United States maintained a policy of hostility.

The official newspaper Granma said the execution by firing squad Monday of Eduardo Diaz Betancourt, who was convicted of sabotage, terrorism and enemy propaganda, was "just and exemplary."

Two other Cuban exiles had death sentences commuted to 30 years in prison.

Granma said in an editorial that the government would fight without quarter to thwart attempts by U.S.-based Cuban exiles and internal dissidents to overthrow it.

"We will not allow defeated counter-revolution to raise its head," the newspaper said in a banner headline.

"We will crush without hesitation every attempt made. We will not allow the slightest opportunity for the squalid and miserable ranks of the internal fifth column to raise their heads."

The three exiles from Miami, Florida, were captured with arms and explosives last Dec. 29 shortly after landing by dinghy on the shore of Cuba's northern Matanzas province.

Several foreign leaders asked the Havana government for clemency for the three men.

Granma said that while the U.S. government could not be held directly responsible for the abortive raid, it had allowed Cuban exile groups to plan and launch such attacks with impunity from U.S. territory.

Most of all, the newspaper added, the U.S. government maintained an "aberrant and obstinate policy to destroy the Cuban revolution."

This acted as an encouragement to anti-Communist Cuban exile groups in Florida and to dissident organisations, "delinquents, outlaws and social garbage," inside Cuba.

"While this policy exists, there can not be the slightest tolerance or flexibility," Granma said.

The editorial appeared to echo past hints by senior Cuban officials that if Washington adopted a more friendly policy, the Havana government might give more political space to those who disagreed with its one-party Communist system.

But Granma made clear that under current circumstances the authorities would show no mercy to political opponents.

Cuban police have launched a major security crackdown in the last few weeks. More than two dozen opponents of the government have been arrested and several were swiftly tried and jailed.

Meanwhile, Cuban exiles in

Miami's Little Havana Monday took their shock and outrage to the streets and the airwaves when they learned that one of their own had been executed on terrorism charges in Cuba.

Dozens of Cuban-Americans took to the streets of the Little Havana district, honking car horns and some screaming "Fidel Castro assassin" as they gathered near a monument to the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

Cuban exiles flooded Spanish-language radio stations with telephone calls protesting against what one anti-Castro radio commentator on WQBA called Diaz's "assassination."

A White House spokesman had no immediate comment on the execution. U.S. officials had appealed for clemency for the three and denied Cuban allegations of official U.S. involvement in the alleged sabotage mission.

Mr. Diaz and the two other men were Cuban exiles who lived in Miami.

"To freedom for Cuba, to freedom for Cuba," shouted one caller who said he was 91 and hoped to live long enough to see his homeland free of communism.

"It's Castro and Raul (Castro's brother) who should face the firing squad," said one woman. "This is what you'd expect of them, they don't believe in God."

"I can only think of his mother," added another caller.

All declined to give their names. Mr. Diaz and the other two men, long-time Miami residents Daniel Samuel Santovenia and Pedro Alvarez Pedrosa, were apprehended after landing a raft on the Cuban coast on Dec. 29. They were convicted of terrorism after a summary trial.

Mr. Diaz, a short, pudgy long-haired man who came to the United States on a fishing boat eight months ago, has no relatives in Miami. Acquaintances have described him as someone who hated Fidel Castro and was frequently in trouble back home in Cuba because of his black market dealings in commodities ranging from lobsters to foreign currencies.

A spokesman for the extreme-right Alpha 66 group, which holds weekend combat training sessions in the Everglades, said the three men had strengthened the exiles' cause.

"Since this whole incident began Alpha 66 has been swamped by volunteers who want to join us so they can get training so they can go fight in Cuba," leader Rodolfo Frometa told Reuters.

The relatives of Mr. Santovenia and Mr. Alvarez hope their loved ones will eventually get lighter sentences. They had held vigils and rallies in Little Havana and international human rights groups have also appealed for clemency for the men.

Iliescu wants more Western aid, former Soviet Moldova

BUCHAREST (AP) — President Ion Iliescu said Monday that a lack of Western aid caused his government's failure to improve poor living conditions in the two years since communism fell.

In an exclusive interview with the Associated Press, Mr. Iliescu also said it was "historically inevitable" that the former Soviet Republic of Moldova would rejoin Romania.

Mr. Iliescu, who held high government posts under the Communists, conceded Romania has a poor political image abroad that has kept it from receiving Western aid and credits.

But he said there is a "great split between image and reality," arguing that the repressive Communist system has been dismantled since the bloody revolution that ousted Nicolae Ceausescu.

His government has been drawing more criticism recently over the economic problems that have accompanied moves to transform Romania's economy into a market system.

The West has "offered lessons

about democracy (but) no concrete support," Mr. Iliescu said. "Life is worse now," he conceded, saying industrial production was only about two-thirds the level before the revolution.

However, he claimed Romanians now enjoy a steadier supply of food, electricity and heat than under communism.

"But it is not easy when production is less and internal and external conditions unfavourable," he said, alluding to the lack of foreign financing and domestic political tensions.

"Without external credits we cannot promote economic reform," he said.

Poland and Hungary together have obtained nearly \$40 billion in Western financing during the last two years, while Romania has struggled for more than a year to obtain \$1 billion from the West.

In his strongest comment yet on Moldova, Mr. Iliescu said the "process is inevitable" that the former Soviet republic will unite with Romania.

Most of Moldova was controlled by Romania before World War II, and the region is home to a strongly nationalist ethnic Romanian majority.

But Mr. Iliescu said Romania should not press the issue and instead wait for Moldova to initiate any move toward unification.

Mr. Iliescu conceded there are widespread suspicions about his government because of ties to the previous dictatorship. But he contended Romania has dismantled its old internal security apparatus — the securitate.

"Romania has undergone more dynamic changes than any other country in Eastern Europe," he said.

He noted Romania has the only Eastern European country where violence was needed to overthrow a Communist regime. He said many other former Communist countries benefited from a period of transition toward greater political and economic openness that was denied Romania by Mr. Ceausescu.

Government forces break through in western Georgia

SAMTREDIA, Georgia (R) — Forces of the provisional government Tuesday broke through loyalist lines outside this west Georgian city and vowed to drive supporters of ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia into the sea.

Soldiers of the ruling Military Council, which forced Mr. Gamsakhurdia from his presidential bunker on Jan. 6, captured a bridge over the River Tkhenistskali opening the way to an advance on Poti, on the Black Sea coast.

"We will develop this attack. This is not an opera... We will drive them into the sea," said an exhausted Jaba Ioseliani, co-chairman of the Military Council.

A police car raced through the streets of Samtredia broadcasting appeals for blood donors. Aircraft from the former Soviet Air Force swooped low over the

scene of the battle before turning away without intervening.

There was no immediate word on the number of casualties but wounded soldiers were seen returning from the bridge.

The battle for the bridge began when loyalists abandoned their sniper campaign and launched an assault on government positions.

Heavy artillery and automatic gunfire shook the area.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia returned to western Georgia last week from a temporary refuge in neighbouring Armenia hoping to reclaim power from the Military Council now running Tbilisi.

He was sought to break off his Megrelian homeland and neighbouring Abkhazia from the rest of the republic.

But the government's success outside Samtredia, an important railway junction, has left a hole in loyalist defences.

Police arrest 21 in clashes that mar King observance

DENVER (Agencies) — A Ku Klux Klan (KKK) rally near a parade commemorating the birth of slain U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. sparked violent clashes Monday that ended with the arrests of 21 people.

Among those arrested was a man with a gun whom police identified as a Klansman. Seven people were injured, including three police officers, but none seriously, authorities said.

Klan leaders said their demonstration was held to protest against the holiday marking Rev. King's birthday. Klan members chanted "white power" during the rally, which lasted nearly three hours.

The violence in Denver was in sharp contrast to peaceful celebrations in other parts of United States, highlighted by a

march in Atlanta led by South African black activist Winnie Mandela.

The Denver clashes, which were recorded by television news cameras, came three days after a U.S. judge ordered Colorado officials to allow the Klan demonstration despite warnings from public officials.

Police arrested 21 people after a crowd attacked a sheriff's van believing it held Klan members.

Rev. King, an eloquent Baptist minister who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, led the mass civil rights movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1968.

The holiday honouring his Jan. 15, 1929, birthday, was established by the U.S. Congress in 1984 and first celebrated in January 1986.

Bush approval rating sinks to all-time low — poll

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Support for President George Bush has fallen to all-time low, and for the first time an unnamed Democratic pollster has a clear lead over the president as the voters' choice, according to a CBS news poll.

Only 45 per cent, fewer than ever before, approve of how Mr. Bush is doing his job and only 19 per cent approve of how he is handling the U.S. economy.

According to the poll, conducted nationwide by telephone Jan. 14-19, approval of foreign policy declined to 48 per cent, the lowest number since the start of the Bush presidency.

Compared with a similar CBS poll taken Jan. 6-8, Bush's approval declined from 48 per cent and rating on foreign policy declined from 59 per cent.

Mr. Bush is the likely Republican nominee for a second term as president, and five Democrats are seeking the nomination to face him in the 1992 election.

In addition, the current CBS poll reported that 19 per cent of respondents approve of the way Mr. Bush is handling the economy, compared with 23 per cent in the earlier poll. Seventy-three per cent disapprove of the economic issue, up from 67 per cent.

Among registered voters, only 38 per cent of those surveyed said they would probably vote for Mr. Bush against an unspecified Democratic challenger. In the earlier poll, 41 per cent said they would vote for Mr. Bush. Forty-three per cent said they would vote for a Democratic candidate, up from 38 per cent in the Jan. 6-8 tally.

Yugoslav truce holds as Croatia, army talk peace

BELGRADE (R) — Guns were silent across most of Croatia Tuesday as the Yugoslav army and Croatian officials held peace talks in Hungary to bolster their fragile ceasefire.

Croatia's military chiefs sent a stern protest to the army over truce violations Monday, which it said included a large number of air force flights over the new independent state, machinegun fire at a funeral and attacks in other areas.

"By such actions and by terrorising and ill-treating the civilian population of the Republic of Croatia, the Yugoslav army and forces under its control are persistently violating the ceasefire," said the protest, dispatched Monday night.

The army has also complained of violations by Croatian forces in recent days, but the battlefield was mostly quiet Tuesday.

Croatian radio reported only sporadic gunfire around Gospić in central Croatia and near Zadar on the Adriatic coast. It said five houses were set ablaze near Zadar.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported a two-hour clash in eastern Croatia but made no mention of casualties.

More than 6,000 people have been killed in fighting between Croatian militias and army-backed Serb irregular forces since Croatia declared its independence in June.

But the latest ceasefire has held since Jan. 3, despite the sporadic violations, and the United Nations hopes to deploy a 10,000-strong peace-keeping force if the truce lasts.

In the latest peace move, Croatian and Yugoslav army representatives held talks in the southern Hungarian town of Pecs. The meeting was chaired by representatives of the European Community monitoring mission supervising the ceasefire.

Issues on the agenda included the shooting down of an unarmed EC helicopter by the Yugoslav Air Force on Jan. 7, coordination of air traffic control and plans for future talks.

Tension has risen since Croatia and neighbouring Slovenia won international recognition as independent states last week.

Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia had their applications for recognition rejected but Bosnia's presidency decided Monday to push ahead with plans to hold an independence referendum.

Although both republics still want independence, Serbia and its allies have drawn up a plan for building a new Yugoslavia.

A group of experts set up by federal parliament outlined a draft law Monday to create a temporary constituent assembly comprising 30 members from each remaining republic and prepare a new constitution and electoral law.

Kazakhstan missile launch ignites row

MOSCOW (R) — A huge missile blasted off from the Central Asian state of Kazakhstan, igniting a row about who really controls the mighty, former Soviet nuclear arsenal.

Kazakhstan, now a nuclear power, says it knew nothing about a long-range rocket test-fired by the still-powerful central military command, virtually all that's left of the old Communist super-state.

The dispute underscored uncertainty over the control of the strategic arsenal in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) which succeeded the Soviet Union.

The incident was revealed as the West sought to ease doubts that the four nuclear-armed republics — Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan — have firm authority over their new weapons of mass destruction.

Kazakh officials acknowledged the daily Izvestia said a Dec. 20 launch of a modified SS-19 intercontinental ballistic missile from Kazakh territory occurred without their knowledge.

They commented that the newly-independent state did not have the technical means to control flights from its own Tyuratam launch site.

"Despite the close contacts that now exist between us and the commanders of the strategic forces, only they can give the final answer" about a launch, said the head of the republic's Defence Committee, S. Nurmagametov.

Izvestia Monday night also quoted General Yuri Gusev, responsible for central space armaments, as confirming the launch, which he said was scheduled months in advance before the breakup of the Soviet Union.

He said the SS-19 was modified for a space shot but gave no details as to its purpose.

Gen. Gusev said U.S. officials were informed of the launch but Kazakh officials were kept ignorant of it.

Western leaders have focused attention on neutralising as many as possible of the roughly 30,000 nuclear warheads on the territory of the former Soviet Union, including offers of aid and technical assistance to dismantle the arsenal.

One such plan, proposed by Jacques Attali, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, would "buy down" the Commonwealth's 60-70 billion debt in exchange for nuclear weapons.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, on a just-completed tour of Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, brought home the West's concern to Commonwealth leaders who have agreed to collective control of the nuclear forces.

Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus have promised to rid their territory of weapons of mass destruction, either by destroying them or by shipping them then off to Russia.

Western officials also fear that former Soviet rocket scientists, faced with unemployment amid economic turmoil, would peddle their expertise to Third World countries eager to obtain nuclear weapons technology.

Military issues have proved among the most vexing facing the new Commonwealth, pitting leading members Russia and Ukraine against one another for control of the big Black Sea Fleet and over creation of a central armed force.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, a Communist ideologue turned nationalist, has angered the military high command and Russian leader Boris Yeltsin with demands for control of the fleet and opposition to a Commonwealth force.

The Russian-based leadership of the former Soviet army issued a fresh warning to Ukraine Monday that political stability depended on the goodwill of the military.

Armed forces spokesman General Valery Manilov told a new conference leaders such as Kravchuk could ill afford to ignore the demands for social and professional security expressed at Friday's Kremlin meeting of 5,000 officers.

Gen. Manilov said the 3.7 million-strong military was a force that guaranteed stability in the new Commonwealth.

"This is an objective force, which cannot be left out of the calculations of today's politicians, at home or abroad," he said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Watanabe disavows 'lazy Americans' jibe

TOKYO (R) — Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe hurried to distance himself Tuesday from a senior ruling party colleague who said American workers are lazy and 30 per cent are illiterate. Mr. Watanabe, who flew overnight to Washington where he is to attend discussions on aid to the former Soviet republics, said in a statement he did not share the views expressed by Yoshio Sakurai, veteran speaker of the lower house of parliament. "I do not believe those remarks reflect the way of thinking of Japanese people in general," said Mr. Watanabe, who has himself been in trouble in the past for racial slurs. Mr. Sakurai, 79, made headlines across the United States Monday with his attack on American workers, made in an address to supporters in his provincial constituency. "The quality of American labour is poor," he was reported as saying. "About 30 per cent of the workers cannot read. Under these circumstances, executives cannot give them" written instructions." He was speaking in the context of Japanese pledges, made under pressure from President George Bush during his visit here this month, to come to the aid of the ailing U.S. car industry by boosting imports of American cars and parts.

37 killed in Sri Lanka ambush blast

COLOMBO (R) — A jungle ambush and an explosion at an army camp in eastern Sri Lanka left at least 37 government soldiers dead Tuesday, military spokesmen said. At least 17 people were killed and about 60 injured in a huge explosion near an army camp where weapons and ammunition are stored at an air force base in eastern Trincomalee district, spokesmen said. "The figure may go up," a military spokesman in Colombo said. "Some airmen were making bombs close by. We think something may have gone wrong there." The wounded were being transported to hospitals in the capital. Several buildings were severely damaged but aircraft were untouched, he said. "I was about nine miles (14 km) away but I felt the blast very strongly," one local resident said. Earlier Tuesday, Tamil separatist rebels ambushed and killed 20 soldiers in the thick jungles of Trincomalee.

Deng visits south China

HONG KONG (R) — China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, whose whereabouts are rarely officially revealed, is visiting the thriving Shenzhen special economic zone, a local official said Tuesday. Wong Sunwah, director of news at the People's Government of Shenzhen, said Mr. Deng, 87, was with President Yang Shangkun. "They arrived two days ago. It is very normal for party and national leaders, or even Deng Xiaoping, to pay a visit to a special economic zone like Shenzhen," Mr. Wong said. Deng last appeared in public about a year ago attending a Lunar New Year party in Shanghai. He no longer officially holds any senior party or state position. Mr. Wong, speaking by telephone from Shenzhen, which borders the British colony of Hong Kong, declined to give further details or say how long Mr. Deng would stay.

Release of breast implant studies sought

WASHINGTON (AP) — Dow Corning Corp. said Monday it will respond by Wednesday to a government request that it release 90 studies and memoranda on which regulators based a moratorium on the use of silicone gel breast implants. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says the documents should be made public and that if the company did not allow their release, the agency would "take other steps" to do so. "We'll have a response on Wednesday," Dow Corning spokeswoman Barbara Carmichael said, referring to the deadline specified in an FDA letter Friday. "Our intent is to release all the documents dealing with science," she said. As to the memoranda, she said, "we're still sorting that through." Ten of the items on the list of 90 are scientific studies and at least four of them were made available to the FDA and to the public last July as part of Dow Corning's application for marketing approval. Ms. Carmichael said. The company was still trying to identify the other studies definitively, she said.

COLUMN

'Fergie' under fire again

LONDON (R) — Britain's fun-loving Duchess of York, already hounded by the popular press for her friendship with a Texan oil millionaire, found herself under fire again for high jinks on a flight home from the United States. Tabloid newspaper journalists said the 32-year-old duchess, married to Queen Elizabeth's son Prince Andrew, put a bag over her head, poked her tongue out through a hole in it, and threw napkins and sachets of sugar around the first-class cabin. The duchess, known as Fergie, was returning to Britain from Florida where she had spent much of her time evading reporters after the discovery last week of photographs said to show her in pool-side poses with Texan Steven Wyatt. The unpublished photographs were taken in 1990 when naval officer Prince Andrew was away at sea and prompted pages of speculation about the Yorks' five-year marriage. "Foolish Fergie," said the Daily Mail, whose reporter on the plane said the duchess pulled faces at her father and made bird-like noises to the consternation of other passengers. The duchess's father was quoted as telling reporters that his daughter was merely letting off steam after the strain of the past week. But the tabloids were not amused. "Pass the sick bag" commented the Daily Star in a scathing front-page editorial, adding "Fergie's gone over the top this time."

Can it remember to shut the barn door?

AMSTERDAM (R) — Dairy farmers weary of rising at dawn to tend their herds will welcome the latest Dutch invention — a cow-milking robot. Unlike current milking machines, the robot can move around a barn, find and milk cows without human assistance, said the company that developed it. "The robot electronically recognises every animal and a computer directs the robot arm to the animal's teats," said a spokesman for Gascogne Melotte Holding BV, which launched the invention at a trade fair. The robot can boost milk output by 15 per cent and should revolutionise the dairy farm, the company said. Cows apparently like it too. "They get used to the robot incredibly fast. They find it better because they are milked more often and they have more freedom to move around," the spokesman said.

Ex-Beatle, Baltic states share music prize

STOCKHOLM (R) — Ex-Beatle Paul McCartney and the newly-independent Baltic states became a first winners of a new annual Swedish Music Award — the four-million crown (\$690,000) Polar Music Prize. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which won independence from the Soviet Union last year, were awarded the prize to support the development of their musical cultures. McCartney was named as a recipient for being "a creative and imaginative renewer of popular music during more than three decades of world-wide activities as composer and artist," the academy said. A former manager of the disbanded pop group ABBA set up the prize, awarded by the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. It amounted to one million crowns (\$172,500) each for McCartney and the three republics. ABBA manager and lyricist Stikkan Anderson, 60, based the award on the Nobel Prizes. He had offered to finance a Nobel Prize in music but was turned down.

Don't show us as idiots, Norway tells Swedish TV

OSLO (R) — Norwegians shouldn't be portrayed as idiots, Oslo's diplomats have told Swedish National Television. On a children's programme just before Christmas, Sweden's Channel 1 showed a man who pretended to be an idiot, wearing a knitted hat with the word "Norway" written up front. This upset Norway's embassy in Stockholm which complained in a letter. "It is seriously going too far..." "I know Norwegian children living in Stockholm who were hurt and confused over being depicted this way," an embassy spokeswoman told the Norwegian daily Verdens Gang. Swedish television said it regrets the incident, which reflects a tradition between neighbouring Norwegians and Swedes who constantly make jokes about each other... until someone goes too far.